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I THINK OF THEE.

BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

When the rich tints of eventide are filling
The glorious west,
And beauty like a living pulse is thrilling
The sunset's breast—
When eve's low winds in spirit-tones are calling
From every tree,
And dews upon the shutting flowers are falling,
I think of thee.

When the young crescent moon is sweetly gleaming
Through twilight bowers,
And birds beneath the dewy leaves are dreaming
Of spring's first flowers—
When moonlight clouds like fairy barks are stealing
O'er heaven's blue sea,
And the sweet hour thrills all the chords of feeling,
I think of thee.

When the lone river's cadences are swelling
Upon the gale,
And the deep voices of the night are telling
Their wizard tale—
When love's own star through mists and dews is shining
On vale and lea,
Oh, then a thousand lonely hearts are pining,
Sweet girl, for thee.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the Distsict Court for the Southern District of New York.

BION, THE WANDERER;

OR,

THE FAITHLESS GUARDIAN.

A STORY OF HOME, OF THE OCEAN, AND OF OTHER CLIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "ORION, THE GOLD-BEATER;" "THE GUNMAKER OF MOSCOW;" "KARMEL, THE SCOUT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.—CONTINUED.

Barrabas rested his narrow brow upon two fingers, and pondered, and then he added—

"I see it all but the *father* part of it. You'd better never claim to be the boy's parent."

"I have thought of that myself. However, there's plenty of time to fix that."

"Certainly—plenty. So I see it all. Yes—all. I understand you now, sir."

"And now about the price?"

"Why—look ye: There's to be expense, here, sir—considerable expense."

"All of which I will pay."

"Oh—ah—very well."

"Come, Mr. Lattimore—out with it. Let's have that settled at once."

"But how long am I to have anything to do with this?"

"You shall help me as I may require, until the boy is safely off."

"Well," said the shark, with a sudden settling of his whole long frame into a state of determinate rest, "the figure has come to me. It seems to be a sort of a prophetic intelligence that has whispered—*ten thousand dollars!*"

"Ten thousand angels!"

"Exactly, my friend. They'll be angels to you if they give you two hundred and fifty thousand hard dollars."

"Two hundred and *fifty?* Where'd you find that fifty?"

"O—that's easily accounted for. You told me *over* two hundred thousand. Of course I suppose there must be some other property—jewels, house, perhaps—horses—so on."

"Ten thousand."

"You agree, then?"

Christopher Huntley gazed at that waistcoat button again, and thought. The attorney saw his thoughts very plainly, and concluded to help him.

"Remember: For seven years I must be ready at any moment to attend you. I must be responsible for much; and all for you."

"Well," said the false brother, "you shall have it."

"When?"

"When I get the money.

"I have your word?"

"You have. Do you want more?"

"No. In matters of this kind writings are worth but little. You can't depend upon them unless you keep them; and if you keep them, ten chances to one that they don't mysteriously appear to your own ruin when you aint looking for them. No. If you say you'll give me the ten thousand dollars, I shall be sure to get them if you get your prize."

"And now to business," cried Huntley, anxiously. "Now you can explain. How must I be made guardian of the boy and his property?"

"You say the mother is perfectly willing?"

"Not only willing, but anxious."

"Then that is simple enough. You must get an instrument from her, directing that you be appointed guardian over her child. This may be witnessed by me, or by some one else; and certified by the Probate office. This you will take to New Orleans, and there you will present yourself to the Orphan's Court. I don't know what the court is called there; but that matters not. You will present your documents, and they will then give you letters of guardianship. You will have to give ample security for the true performance of your duties. Can you do that?"

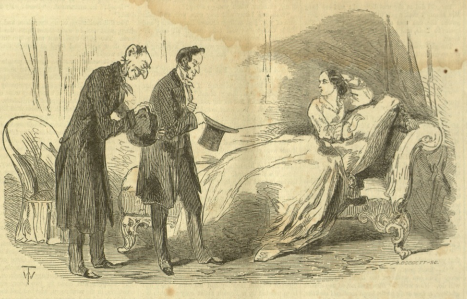
"Yes—I think I can."

"Then it is all very simple. Only I would have the business all done upon the fact that the father is dead."

"O—I mean that. She won't be particular about scrutinising the instrument."

"That's good."

"And now," resumed Huntley, "You must go with me and see her. I promised her I would bring a lawyer."


A.BOBBETT-SC.

THE PLOTTERS AND THE DYING MOTHER.

"I will go."

"You have a better suit than that?"

"Yes."

"Then suppose you get ready to go with me at four o'clock this afternoon? In the [illegible] you can be writing out the letter I [illegible], and which she is to sign. Mind that you have it strong. I am to be a bona fide guardian; and it must be expressly understood that I am to invest as much of the property—all of it, if I please—in this city. You know how to put it."

"I understand all that, sir. Your letter shall be prepared; and I will be ready to accompany you at the time specified."

"You will remember all the points. You know I want no leaks. All must be safe and sure."

"I understand you. I have an interest—ten thousand—I shall not be likely to leave a leak for that. One moment, sir. Now, if you please:—Names—ages—places—dates—etcetera."

While thus speaking, Barrabas Lattimore had spread out the half of an old letter, which happened to have a blank page, and prepared to note down the facts he needed to govern him in filling up the instrument he was to prepare. Huntley gave them to him as he asked for them, and finally he had them all down, even to the present position of every dollar of invested or deposited property.

This done, the dark uncle arose and took his hat. He moved to the door—stopped—turned—and gazed into the attorney's vulture-like face.

"Never mind," he said, as though he had just shaken off a doubt. "There is no danger."

"If there *is* danger," returned the shark, in that old slow, emphatic tone, "you will meet it at the hands of Christopher Huntley!"

"I have no fear. At four—remember. Good day."

The false brother was soon in the street; and people who noticed him wondered why he walked so fast, and why he gazed only upon the pavement

But Barrabas Lattimore no one saw, save that Infinite One who knew his heart; and who saw in all this but one more item of crime added to the long, dark column which the recording angel had already put down against him!

CHAPTER IV.

THE PLOT IS SEALED.

The physician sent Bion from the room. He knew the boy's quickness of understanding, and consequently wished not to speak too plainly before him. The little fellow cast a quick, apprehensive glance into his mother's face, but she smiled sweetly upon him, and he seemed to feel easier.

"I sent your child away, Mrs. Huntley, because it becomes my painful duty to speak some words to you which had better come to his ear from your lips."

He stopped to remark the effect of his words; and he saw that she was very calm and resigned.

"If you wish to call in any other physician you can do so," he resumed. "I would urge you to do so if you think you would feel better satisfied. And further, if you wish, I will call a few of my professional friends in, and hold a consultation. I shall not feel satisfied if you have a wish unanswered.

"As far as you are concerned, doctor," the woman replied, in a low, calm tone, "I am not only perfectly satisfied, but I am grateful for your kindness and attention. I have the fullest confidence in your judgment, and ask for nothing more. If I thought there was need of a consultation I should freely request it. If I thought there might be in this city another physician who could do for me what you cannot do, I should frankly request you to send him to me. And, furthermore, if I held a lingering hope of recovery, I should ask you to strain every nerve in my behalf. But I have none of these feelings. If you can render my short stay on earth in any degree comfortable, I wish you to do it."

"Then you have no hopes of recovery?"

"None at all."

"And you feel that you cannot live long?".

"I have been assured of it for some time."

"Mrs. Huntley, you have removed a load from my heart. The most disagreeable duty in all my professional routine is that of informing a patient, and especially a mother, that earthly hope is at an end. That duty I knew I must perform here today. I suppose you must have some business to arrange. You have a child, and, I suppose, some property."

"Yes, sir; and I have made arrangements to have all attended to."

"Ah—I am glad of that. Will you have it done soon?"

"This very day, sir.'

"Then you have friends here?"

"Yes, sir;—a brother of my husband is here."

"Ah—I was not aware of that. Then you are well provided for. Yes—yes. I am glad. I knew you were not generally acquainted here; and I feared that you might find no one in whom you could trust. I would have offered my services, but it is better as it is."

As the physician thus spoke he took the invalid's wrist and felt her pulse.

"Doctor," she said, with a perceptible tremor of the voice, "you asked me if I would have my business attended to soon. You can probably judge something of the powers of my vital organs. Tell me frankly: How long will I stay here?"

"Why—I could not give a positive answer to such a question. I have known persons to linger along several weeks after all hope was gone. Only a month ago I left a female patient in the evening, and on my way home I called upon the undertaker, and informed him that his services would in all probability be needed on the following day at the house of the person I had just left. She lived three weeks after that. That is,—she breathed, and seemed to realize that she lived; but she eat nothing, and, I think, knew no one from the time I first mentioned. An ounce of wine per day was all she took. I may, however, assure you of one thing. Your present amount of vitality must soon be exhausted. I should say that it could not sustain you over ninety-six hours. You may not survive so long."

During this speech Mrs. Huntley had been gazing the man calmly in the face, and, as he concluded, she bowed her head, and a shudder seemed to creep through her frame. When she looked up there was an eager expression upon her countenance, and with a convulsive movement she placed her hand upon the doctor's arm.

"Answer me one question, sir," she whispered. "Answer me according to the best of your judgment. Shall I die in the possession of my senses?"

"I am confident that you will. Since you ask me, I will speak plainly. Your death will not be long postponed. After four-and-twenty hours shall have passed you will be liable to drop away at any time. If nothing occurs to change the tendency of your system you will pass away as calmly and easily as you would sink to sleep."

"Thank you, sir."

After this the physician prescribed a simple medicine for promoting ease and rest, and then took his leave.

The sun, which had broken through the dismal clouds for an hour or so towards the evening, was very near setting, and the apartment of the invalid was becoming gloomy, when Lida came and announced that Mr. Christopher was below.

"Is any one with him?" the sick woman asked.

"Yes, Missus. A man is with him—a drefful unhappy lookin' man."

"You may send them up."

Belinda Huntley sat in her great easy-chair, and her boy stood by her side. There had been a sunbeam upon the casement of the window, but it was gone now, and the houses over the way were beginning to look dim and ghostly.

"Why does that dark man come here so much, mamma?" the child asked, gazing up into his face.

"He is helping me, my child. He has been very kind to me and I hope you will love him."

"Do you hope so, mamma?"

"Yes, Bion,—I do, certainly."

"O—then I will. If he is good to you I couldn't help loving him. Only—he——"

"What were you going to say, my child?"

"You wont blame me, mamma, will you?"

"Of course not," replied the parent, drawing the fair head upon her bosom. "What were you thinking of?"

"I was going to say, mamma, that I hoped he wouldn't live with you always. I will love him as well as I can; but you wouldn't be so happy with him as you would with my own papa, would you?"

She pressed the boy to her bosom; but before she could make any reply the door was opened, and Christopher entered, followed by Barrabas Lattimore, Esquire. Mrs. Huntley bade her son run out and find Lida, and stay with her a little while. He started to obey her, and as he did so he caught the eye of his uncle—that black, evil eye, which might have sent a shudder to a stouter frame. The child stopped and gazed. He could not help it. That Medusan eye seemed to take from him the power of motion.

Slowly the uncle raised his hand and pointed to the door. Bion uttered a quick, low cry of pain, and moved on. His mother heard him, and turned; but he was gone. Christopher saw the movement, and immediately arrested her attention.

"My beloved sister, allow me to introduce to you, 'Squire Lattimore. We should have been here before, but my friend had so much important business before the Orphan's Court that he could not get away before."

This was as near the truth as he could speak on that particular subject. The fact was, when Huntley had seen Lattimore in his "other clothes" he made up his mind that it would not be safe to introduce him into any respectable company until the dim light of evening could hide the real state of the 'Squire's wardrobe.

"You are in season, sir," the woman said; and as she spoke she turned her gaze upon the lawyer.

"Madam," spoke Barrabas, with an inclination of the body which totally hid the face, "I am most happy to serve you."

"My brother will direct you, sir," the invalid returned, with a slight shudder.

There was no mistaking the meaning of that tone and movement. She could not look into that face again. Yet he might be a good lawyer enough for the work now required at his hands. Barrabas drew up the hanging lip as he noticed the effect his face had produced, and one who had been watching him at the moment might have seen a grim look of conscious power drawn about his semi-circular mouth, which seemed to say—

"*Wait!*"

"My sister," said Christopher, as soon as he saw that she had been terrified at the sight of his companion's face, "I told you our friend was a little eccentric. Do you remember the circumstance of the saving of those two children from the flames about three or four weeks ago?"

Mrs. Huntley said she didn't.

"I thought you might have seen it in the papers. Ah—'twas a fearful moment! The house wrapped in flames, from garret to cellar—the frantic mother in the street, wringing her hands, and trying to break from those who held her—people, in a dense mass—a multitude standing there, transfixed with horror! At an upper window, with the mad flames leaping all about them, stood two small children! What could save them? A man was seen to dash through the flames into the house. He disappeared within the living fire! People cried out that a crazy man had rushed in there to a suicidal death! But O!—in a few minutes a human form was seen to leap from the roaring flames; and under each arm he bore a child!—two children! They were safe!—they were restored to their widowed mother! Our friend, Barrabas Lattimore, was that noble, generous preserver! He has not yet recovered from the fearful effects of that fiery ordeal. His face has received a sad, a melancholy scar, which must mar its beauty forever! But what is outward beauty to such heaven-born beauty of soul? What need has such a man for beauty of face? As we came hither to-day a grateful throng impeded our way, and hundreds rushed out to bless the noble savior of the widow's children ere he passed from their sight!"

The pure woman, who dreamed not that the only brother of her husband could be a villain, gazed again into Lattimore's face; and this time her soul set its stamp of pity upon her pallid features.

"The memory of that deed must be a source of peculiar joy to you, sir," she said, turning away no more from the repulsive face.

"Ah—it is," the attorney replied, meekly. "I would not sell it for anything."

"No—money cannot buy such joys."

"I merely mentioned the circumstance to show how a constant attention to the interests of children will beget such a love for them that a person cannot refrain from even sacrificing his own life to save them in the hour of danger."

The invalid bowed in acquiescence to the idea, and then said that she was very weak, and must request that the business be done as soon as possible.

"I have had the instrument all drawn up," said Christopher; "and if you like, I will read it."

"I will hear it, of course," returned Belinda.

"Hereupon the brother-in-law drew from his breast-pocket a document, which bore an eminently legal look, and proceeded to read something addressed "to all people, and everybody generally, to whom these presents shall, or may, by any possibility, come." As Mr. Christopher Huntley read it, it seemed to say that, "I, Belinda Huntley," &c., feeling sure that she was near her death, requested that her "well-beloved" Christopher Huntley, brother of her husband, might have charge of her child until the return of his father; and also, that said brother might have charge of the money to see that it was kept safely, and not wrongfully used, &c. It was addressed to the Orphan's Court, of New Orleans.

The real document, as it read in consecutive order, was a simple prayer of the "*widow*," Belinda Huntley, to the proper court, asking that Christopher Huntley might be appointed guardian of her child. She was made to state that her husband was, to the best of her belief, dead; and, consequently, she wished her child provided for. She not only requested that Christopher might be guardian of the child, but also that all property might be forthwith placed in his care and keeping, for him to draw and invest it as he saw proper.

The feeble and dying woman heard the instrument read, and she supposed it was all as she had heard it. She dreamed not that her brother could deceive her.

"You will be *very* kind to Bion," she said, looking up through gathering tears.

"Yes, my sister."

"And you will not leave the sea-board until Gideon comes home?"

"Of course not. Even if he doesn't arrive before spring, I will await his coming."

"Well—I suppose I must sign it?"

"Of course," returned Christopher. "And, by the way," he added, "for your own sake, I think we had better have two or three witnesses. Then, you know, our beloved Bion will not be bothered by having any doubts cast upon his—his—a—I mean that no one can then succeed in getting him into their power. You know how much some men will do for money. There might be many who would try to get him into their power, if they could."

The mother wished all precautions taken which could be of use, and at the request of Christopher, she concluded to send for some of the inmates of the house. The bell was rung, and, when Lida came, she was directed to see if there were any gentlemen in the drawing-room, and if there were, to request two of them to walk up to her room.

Huntley pulled Barrabas aside, and whispered into his ear.

"Go to the window when you hear them coming, and pretend as though you saw something. Don't let 'em see your face."

The attorney obeyed without a word.

Ere long the door was opened, and Lida introduced two gentlemen. They were both clerks in the custom-house, and used to signing their names, else they might have requested that one of the lamps should be lighted for their use. Mr. Huntley informed them in a very few words of the nature of the document, and then requested the mother to sign it. She took the pen which had been provided, and the paper was placed upon the corner of a large book, and held before her.

"That is the place," said Christopher, pointing with his finger to the blank line.

She placed the pen upon the spot, and—hesitated.

"You—you—will be very——" She held the pen over the blank place, and gazed up into the dark face of her husband's brother. She spoke so far ere she remembered that others were present. She gazed a moment, and then she added—

"You will be very careful of Bion! You will not let him—let him—suffer."

"Ah, Belinda, your extreme solicitude makes you forgetful. Am I not your brother? Is he not my own blood? Oh! would to God the sad duty were lifted from my shoulders! Belinda—live—live, and be with us yet for years!"

She had no more doubt. She bent over the paper—the pen moved—there was a trace there—a light, delicate trace—a fair hand yet, for all its tremulousness—and it read to those present—it was to read to many others—it was to stand in hours of light, and in hours of darkness and terror—a name held deep in sacred memory by one who had far better have died in that first hour of its transfer there, than have lived the years that were to lead him to manhood—the name—BELINDA HUNTLEY.

With a nervous movement, but yet with a surprising calmness for one who held such a volcano of emotion in his bosom as did he, Christopher Huntley handed the paper to the gentleman who stood nearest him. He took the pen, and, beneath the words "witnessed by," he wrote his name—"CHARLES T. WAMBOLD."

The next signed, and Huntley read—"JAMES U. ARTHURSON." He thanked them in behalf of his sister, and they then left the apartment.

The dark man watched the door until it had closed upon the retiring clerks, and then, with a nervous, excited movement, he forced the instrument into his pocket. There was a demoniac gleam upon his face, and his hands clung together as though they already held masses of gold!

"Perhaps you'd like to look this paper over to-morrow yourself," he said, as he noticed the uneasy, painful look upon the invalid's face.

"O—yes, brother—I should!" she uttered quickly. "I have no doubt; but, yet—I should like to read it when I am stronger. I am not—a—I have no distrust; but you know a mother's feelings."

"Certainly, Belinda—certainly. And the moment I saw you put your name to this, I resolved that you should have opportunity to read it over and study it for yourself. I will hand it in to-morrow morning; and if you are not able to see me, I will send it up by Lida or Lizzy."

While speaking thus, Christopher had been moving towards the bell-cord, and with the last word upon his lips, he pulled. In a moment more Lida entered.

"Your mistress wants you now, Lida. You had better get lights the first thing. Good evening, Belinda. I hope I may find you better to-morrow. I must be going, for I am in a hurry. I have a house to look at in College place—a large, beautiful one, I think of hiring there; and—oh! I hope I may realize it—I pray that you may yet live and move in with me. Good evening.—Angels keep you!"

And thus speaking, the black-hearted brother hurried from the room.

"What did ye tell her ye'd bring her that paper to-morrow for? What did ye say anything about it for?" asked Barrabas, as they walked along, without listeners near them.

"Can't you see a hole through a ladder?" returned Huntley, with a touch of sarcasm.

"I think I can see a hole through some ladders, and perhaps through the one that Christopher Huntley hopes to climb to a fortune on!"

"Aha—old fellow, you don't know everything yet. Couldn't you see by that woman's face that she was very nervous and uneasy?"

"Perhaps I did."

"Well—don't you know that her uneasiness was all on account of that paper?"

"Very likely."

"And don't ye know that she was just upon the very point of asking me to leave it with her?"

"I didn't see that."

"You didn't? Well—I did. I watched her, and I saw her great, soft eyes hunting for the paper she'd signed. I knew she was going to ask me to leave it with her, so that she could read it. Don't it seem natural that she should? Would a mother like her suffer it to be otherwise?"

"Why didn't she read it at first then?" said Barrabas, more for the purpose of holding out than anything else.

"Why didn't she? Are you blind? By the Potter's pipe, old chap, I shall begin to think you ain't safe to help along this work if you can't think quicker than that. Do you suppose a woman as sick as she is would stop business, and keep us all standing before her, while she waded through a strange hand-writing after the news when I was right there to tell it? No. I knew she'd ask me for it; and if she did her fears would have been aroused in a minute if I'd refused it. I might have made the best excuse in the world, and yet 'twould have worked upon her nervous fears. But when *I* came to broach the subject, she felt better; and if I hadn't hurried it on, and got off without giving her a chance, she'd have asked me for it as it was."

"Yes—you did work that pretty well. But how do you mean to work the rest?"

"Why," said Huntley, "when I first spoke I meant to carry the thing away, and then *forget* to carry it back. When she'd ask for it I'd wonder, and make strange at my forgetfulness. But I've got a better idea since. You are still good at imitating autographs, ain't you?"

"—sh! Don't mention such things too loud," whispered the attorney, gazing quickly around. "Yes—I can do it."

"Then we'll make another letter, and have it worded just as I read this one to her. You can put on the names, you know, only being careful to have her's right. Nobody'll see it only her."

This was speedily arranged; and having taken supper at a second-rate drinking-cellar, they went at once to the dark office, and there perfected the plan for the deception of a dying mothor!

CHAPTER V.

THE ORPHAN.

On the day following the signing of the important paper Christopher Huntley called upon his sister-in-law, and she directed that he should be admitted. He came in, and imprinted a Judas kiss upon her hand, and then, having told her that she certainly looked better, he gave her a document to read. She took it, and looked at the signatures. She read her own, and she read the names of the two witnesses; and she read the name of Barrabas Lattimore as the justice before whom it had all been done. After this she commenced at the beginning of the page, and read it carefully through.

"I think it is all right," she said, after she had read portions of it over a second time.

"If there is anything you see which you would like to have changed, we will do it now," returned Christopher. "I wish to have it perfectly satisfactory to you."

"I see nothing there out of the way," the mother resumed, gazing thoughtfully upon the open sheet. "I think it is all right."

"I think so, too, my sister. The value of the instrument only consists in its power of preventing any other party from interfering in the child's affairs. Of course my duty is plain."

"I am much obliged to you, brother. But I must confess——"

She hesitated a moment, and then added,—

"I must confess that when I saw that lawyer's face last evening I was seized with a sudden and dreadful fear. O, what a terrible face!"

"Yes, poor fellow!" responded Huntley, sympathetically. "And he'll always have to carry it, too. The flames absolutely burned away half of his face. But he cares nothing for it. The lives of those two sweet children, and the deep gratitude of their parents, more than make up for the calamity."

"*Parents?* I thought you said their mother was a widow?"

"Their mother? O—ah—yes. O, yes—I remember. We were speaking of the fire. She was a widow. When I first spoke I was thinking of the three little boys he rescued from drowning only a few weeks since. They had a father and mother. O—he is a noble, generous man. I love him!"

Did the mother suspect? No. She handed back the paper, and then closed her eyes. The effort made in reading had been too much for her, and she said so. Christopher was not sorry, for he was anxious to get away.

Belinda sank into an uneasy slumber, and when she awoke she felt very faint and dizzy. She told Lida she would be carried to her bed. The faithful girl took her mistress up, and carried her across the room as directed.

"Ah, missus—you's fadin' all away. You doesn't feel so heavy as Mass'r Bion does."

"I know I am light, Lida.—There.—That will do.—Now sit down and don't let any fly get upon my face."

The girl did as she was directed; and ere long Mrs. Huntley sank again to sleep. When she next awoke the sun was shining into the room. She spoke to Lida, and asked her if the weather was clear.

The girl wondered why her mistress should whisper so carefully to her; but she answered the question by stating that the clouds were all gone, and the sun was shining clear and bright.

"Is Mr. Christopher here?" the invalid asked.

"No, missus."

"I must see him, Lida. You know where he stops."

"No. Lizzy knows."

"Then run and tell Lizzy to hurry off and tell Mr. Huntley that I must see him at once, and that he must bring *that paper* with him. He will understand."

Lizzy received the errand, and started off at once for the hotel where Christopher stopped. She found him in, and he told her he would be right along.

And he was as good as his word. He found his sister-in-law in her bed; and the moment he looked upon her he knew that she—was dying! There was no mistaking that strange color of the lip; that new, fitful glare of the eye; and that dry, cold touch of the hand.

"My brother—there is one thing I forgot—I oughtn't to have done it—but you can put it in. I saw there was a blank place on the paper."

"Yes, Belinda. I had that left on purpose so that you might have anything added you wished."

"O—thank you. Get a pen and ink, and sit up here. You can write on the table.—There—that will do. Now write—'*Bion shall not, on any account whatever, so long as the parties herein mentioned shall live, be separated from the two freed girls, Lida and Lizzy, my servants!* Have you got that down?"

"Yes."

"Then add,—'*In all matters of his nursery care, and general overlooking of his bodily welfare, the two freed girls shall have full charge. They are the servants of my child, left him by me; and, under no contingency but that of death, or some intervention of law, shall they leave him at all.*' Write that."

"It is written."

"I forgot it. But I have been dreaming of it. I feared that some one might want the girls, or that you might not want them about. But you'll attend to this?"

"With my utmost care, sister."

"Then—if we don't meet again, you'll be faithful. You'll tell Gideon all. You'll be very kind to Bion! You'll be kind to Lida and Lizzy, too. They are good girls. I did think of having them find homes elsewhere, but Bion will be happier with them. Oh! Christopher—I place much in your charge. As you keep your faith with your dying sister, so may God do unto you! *Do I not thus ask God to bless you?*"

"Yes.—You do," whispered the dark man, turning away his head.

"*As you keep your faith with your dyiny sister, so may God do unto you!*"

Ah, Christopher Huntley, in long years from now you shall remember those words! Aye—in long years they shall fall back upon your soul, and you shall wish that in that terrible hour, when first the demon entered your heart, you had been a better man! Yes, Christopher Huntley—in the night of your life, when the touch of time is on your brow, and the weight of sorrows bows you down, you shall remember those words, and they shall be the last upon your lips—the last!—the last! When earth fades—when mortal vision fails—when the dark angel comes and bids you follow him to the shores of the Mystic Hereafter—then shall those words tremble upon your lips, and you shall pass away with the dread memory of this hour upon you!

Christopher Huntley sought the fresh air, and as he reached the pavement he muttered to himself,—

"Was't a blessing she meant? Will it be a blessing for me? Pshaw! Don't everybody get wealth if they can?"

And with this idea for consolation he walked on.

As the dark uncle left the chamber Bion entered, and when he saw that his mother was awake he moved noiselessly to her side. She saw him, and with a quick, energetic movement, she drew him upon her bosom as though she would shield him from some impending evil!

"Mother," the boy said, "why do you breathe so curiously?"

The dying woman held her child from her. She gazed into his face a few moments, and then replied,—

"Bion—my son—I must leave you. I am going away, and you will have a mother no more on earth!"

The boy looked up, and upon his handsome features there was a look of utter amazement.

"Going away?" he repeated, breathlessly. "Going to leave Bion? O, no—you cannot. You will take me with you, won't you?"

"Ah, Bion, you know not what I mean. I am dying, my child. I am leaving this scene of pain and trial. My spirit will go away and be with God, and this poor body they will bury in the ground. But you will not be wholly without a mother. God will let me watch over you still."

"*Dying?*" whispered the boy, in a sort of frightened accent. "Dying as Uncle Pomp died?—as poor old Chloe died?"

"Yes, Bion."

The child bowed his head, and covered his face with his hands. Finally he looked up, and while a new light beamed upon his face, he said,—

"I have it, mamma. You are going to be with God, as you told me all pure souls would be?"

"Yes."

"Then we won't be separated, mamma. I'll go, too. You will let me go, won't you? I am good I have always been just as good as I could. God wouldn't refuse me. And then you will be much happier to have me with you, wouldn't you?"

The mother caught her child once more to her bosom, and the tears which she had thus far restrained now burst forth.

"My son," she murmured, "You don't understand it. God calls only those whom He wants. He wants me, and I must go. But you He will keep here. Only think, Bion, how happy you will be when your papa comes home. You would not wish to die and leave him all alone."

"I would rather go with you, mamma."

"But that is not proper, darling. You must be a good man. You must grow up and be of much use in the world. You may live to be honored and respected by all good men. Only think—when you grow up—what a happy thought it will be to you that your mother is looking down upon you, and is made more joyous by the goodness of her son. No, no, my child, you would not wish to go away with me. I shall pray for you, and be often with you when you know it not."

This seemed to calm the child somewhat, and he wiped his eyes, and sat down upon the chair by the bed-side. After a short season of thought he said—

"I mean to be a good man, mamma; and I hope everybody will love me. But if I know you love me, and that I am making you happy, O, I shall be very, very joyous. But who will take care of me, mamma, when you go away?"

"Lida and Lizzy will stay with you, and take care of you, just as they always have done; and Uncle Christopher will take care of all other affairs until your papa comes home."

"But Uncle Christopher wont have anything to do with me, will he?" the boy said, with a shudder.

"Not much, Bion. But he will be very kind. You do not fear him?"

"I don't like him, mamma. I wish the doctor was going to have charge of me."

"You mustn't feel so, my son. Christopher will be very kind. You must love him all you can."

"If he is good I shall; but if he is not good, I shan't let him come here. I wont let him be naughty to me."

The boy's eyes flashed as he spoke, and his little hands were clasped tightly together.

The mother kissed her child, and then turned to Lida, and bid her bring a small camphor-wood box from the side-board. Mrs. Huntley took it, and having opened it, she took therefrom a small golden locket, suspended on a chain of the same precious metal. The locket was about the size of a silver half-dollar, though oval in form. The chain was very fine and firm, and was secured to the ring by means of a curiously contrived clasp. She opened the locket, and held it up before her child.

"Who is that?" she asked.

The boy caught it in his hands, and pressed it to his lips. "It is my papa and my mamma!" he cried.

And so it was. The locket was double, and contained exquisitely painted and most life-like miniatures of Gideon Huntley and his wife. They had been painted by a French artist only a month before the former left for China. Mr. Huntley had two of them taken, so that he might have both pictures. His idea was, that when he looked upon the likeness of his wife he might behold himself by her side; and upon the same principle he had both miniatures put in Belinda's locket also.

"Bion," spoke the mother, "you will keep that always. Here—let me hang it about your neck—There—now, keep it to yourself. If you should show it to everybody, some naughty folks might steal it from you, because it is gold. When you look upon that, you will remember your papa and mamma both; and even when your papa comes home you will look at it to remember me; and you will not forget that your goodness will always make me happy. This shall be an amulet to you, my son."

"An *amulet*, mamma? What is that?"

"In ancient times, Bion, when Alexander the Great lived, nearly all the people used to believe in curious kind of powers. They would hang some little medal, or some gem, about the neck of a child to protect it from evil influences. And even men and women used to wear them, and they firmly believed that thus they would be protected from the power of evil. Of course, I wouldn't have you believe any such thing as this. But still, I really believe that this may have some pure and holy influence over you. If evil ever crosses your path—if you are ever tempted to do anything wrong—if ever the voice of the wicked counsellor whispers in your ear—just look upon this, and you shall be saved. O, my son, you cannot go astray while gazing upon the picture of your mother. You will remember how good she was to you—you will think how she loved you—and, above all else, you will believe she is looking down upon you, wherever you may be, and influencing you for good. Bion, do you understand me?"

"Yes, my mother—I do!"

Belinda Huntley started at the sound of her son's voice, and at the words he uttered. "Yes, *my mother!*" He had never before used those words—he had never said—"my mother." The whole manner and tone and substance of his reply betrayed a deeper understanding than she supposed he possessed. She caught him to her bosom again, and in spasmodic tones she uttered,—

"Keep it, my son—keep it as an amulet that shall preserve you from ill—that shall lead you to all good—that shall keep in your mind the memory of your mother!"

Thus speaking the invalid sank back and closed her eyes. A powerful emotion had given her strength for the work, but it was gone now. Her breath came and went at long and seemingly painful intervals, and Lida and Lizzy crept noiselessly up and gazed into her face. They had seen death often, and they were acquainted with its presence. And they knew the dread angel was at hand even now.

The woman lay with one hand stretched out towards her boy, while the other was resting over her own heart. Her head was slightly raised, and her face turned towards the ceiling.

"Missus—good missus," whispered Lida, taking the left hand from the heart and holding it between both her own.

Mrs. Huntley opened her eyes. A faint smile flitted across her wan features, and a look of intelligence overcame the dread expression that had settled upon the marble countenance.

"Lida—Lizzy," she said, "you will be very kind to Bion."

They would spend their very lives for his good, they said; and they would not leave him even though they had to face death in the pursuit of the duty.

The dying woman smiled her gratitude, and the two faithful beings caught her hands and pressed them to their lips.

"Does the sun shine?" she whispered.

"Yes, missus."

"Draw away the curtain."

Lida sprang to obey the order, and in a moment more a flood of rich, soft light came pouring into the apartment. The sun was very near the western house-tops—it would soon be at rest for the night. The dying woman turned her face towards the glorious monarch of the day, and the golden rays seemed to paint a new life there.

"Bion—my boy—my child—come—rest here."

The child crept gently upon the bed and pillowed his head by the side of his mother's. She lifted her arm, and it fell upon him. And thus they lay—the mother and child—she with her thin, transparent hand drooping over his side, and he with his right arm wound tightly about her. The two serving girls stood by the bedside and looked on.

Presently there came a change in the woman's breathing, and in the gaze of the eye. The intelligent look was gone, and now only a vacant stare was perceptible. The breath came and went at long intervals, each one seeming to be the last.

There was a golden beam upon the marble lip—it quivered there an instant—then crept up to the brow—it mingled with the dark tresses—and in a moment more it faded away. The sun had sunk to its rest, and the brow whereon the last beam had rested was pale and cold.

"Mother! My mother!"

But the boy received no answer.

"Mamma—mamma! Oh! my mamma—speak!"

"—sh! Don't, Bion. She's—dead!"

The boy started up and slid from the bed; and then turned and caught the hand that had been resting upon him. It was cold as ice!

"Dead?" he murmured. "Dead? My mother dead?"

The full realization came upon him, and with a sharp, wild wail he sank down upon the lifeless form. The girls could not move him then, and they drew apart and wept as though their own hearts would break.

When it was dark some strange people came, with candles and with white sheets, and placed their hands with professional coldness upon the corse. If they had one feeling of sympathy it was for the poor, wailing child whom they were obliged to tear away from the object of their labors.

That night Bion slept in the room with Lida and Lizzy. At midnight they supposed he had sunk to sleep, and they soon afterwards followed him into the land of dreams. Towards morning Lida awoke, and as she listened to hear if Bion breathed easily, she missed him. She started up and found him gone. She hastened down to the room where the dead woman lay, and there was the boy, lying across the hard plank, with his little arms wound about the inanimate form of the being he had loved so fondly and so well!

CHAPTER VI.

IMPORTANT STEPS.

During all the long funeral ceremony Bion shed not a tear. Cold, and pale, and worn he sat, almost as death-like as the form in the dark coffin, and his thoughts seemed not at all affected by anything that transpired about him. Once or twice he cast a quick, furtive glance at his uncle, but no one could have told his feelings therefrom. The only weeping was done by two poor, agonized creatures, in the next room, who had lost their last earthly friend and protector. Christopher Huntley put his handkerchief to his eyes occasionally; and some people there thought he mourned.

At the grave Bion's heart sent forth its flood. When they took the form of his mother away, and hid it from him forever, his cries were heart-rending and bitter. But a stout hand pulled him away. He looked up and saw the face of his dark uncle. In a moment his tears stopped flowing, and the old worn look came back.

During a whole week from that time Christopher Huntley came to the house only once. He had placed the boy in charge of Lida and Lizzy, and become responsible for all demands for board. With the assistance of Barrabas Lattimore he gained all the documents he needed from New York; and when he was all ready to start for New Orleans he held a long consultation with his attorney, the result of which was, that Bion was to remain where he had been living until Huntley had returned from the south.

"But," said Christopher, "those two gals. What shall we do with them?"

"What do you mean?" returned Barrabas.

"Why—those two gals would bring eight hundred dollars a piece in New Orleans. They are the best house servants I ever saw."

"Christopher Huntley," said the lawyer, sternly, "don't you be a fool! If you get the rest of the business through safely you'll have enough. Of course those two girls have promised that they wouldn't leave their young charge; and you know your sister had a provision to that effect put into the bogus instrument. Of course the gals know all about it. Now you just carry 'em down South and sell 'em, and in less than a month you'll be suspected. They'll spread your business for you in fine style. No, no. Just you leave 'em be till you come back, and then get the boy away from 'em, and get rid of them the best way you can. But that we can fix when you come home again."

"Well—I suppose you are right," returned Huntley, reluctantly. "Still it seems hard to lose sixteen hundred dollars."

"How can you lose what you haint got. Leave the gals be, and go to New Orleans as quick as you can. When you come back, I'll have some way fixed up for getting rid of the difficulty."

"Will you?"

"Yes. So rest easy on that score."

Christopher went to see his nephew on Sabbath evening; and having chatted awhile upon various matters he told the boy he was going away to be gone a month or two, and asked him if he wished for anything more than he had during that time. Bion said, no. Had he wanted anything never so much before he would not have owned it, for the sight of the dark man was painful to him, and he told Lida more than once that he believed he should rather die than have that man bring him his food.

After a very brief interview Christopher left, and on the following morning started for New Orleans in a fast-sailing barque. He reached his destination in thirteen days, and at once proceeded to hunt up the court which had jurisdiction over the affairs of orphans and widows. He found it, and presented his papers.

He had the elaborately framed, and amply-signed-and-sealed-and-witnessed letter of Belinda Huntley; and he also bore a letter from some of the probate officers of New York. From his close relationship to the deceased, and her child, thus sustained by the direct prayer of the mother, the court was led to entertain none but the most favorable opinions towards the applicant; and in due time he was informed that upon producing the necessary bonds he should have full possession of the child and its property.

The bonds to be given were two hundred and forty-five thousand dollars, that being about the amount owned in that city by the heir. Christopher knew of no one in New Orleans who would become his bondsman for a fiftieth part of that amount; but he was not foiled. Up the river, close by Natchez, lived an old trader who was very wealthy, and who, he was sure, would help him. So up he went, and having found his friend he put the case in this fashion:

First he explained the circumstances of his brother's loss; then of his sister-in-law's sickness; then of his obtaining the letter—being careful, of course, not to tell exactly *how* he obtained it; and then of the result of his petition to the court at New Orleans for letters of guardianship.

"And now," he continued, "let me just whisper in your ear one simple fact; or, rather, two or three of them. In the first place, beside this boy, I am the only living relative. In all the world, there is not another relative of either my brother or his wife, known to the law. Now, this child is nearly gone with a gallopping consumption, which he has inherited from his mother. Added to this, is the almost deadly grief and anguish for the loss of his parents; so that, with both, he must very soon step out. I should be willing at this moment to pledge every penny I own, that he cannot live six months. But, of course, I don't want the court to know of this.

"Thus you will see that you run no risk in becoming my bondsman; for, were I inclined to dishonesty, there could be no opportunity for it."

"But will they take me?" queried the trader.

"I don't want you for a direct bondsman. Crampton and Dunmore will be my bondsmen, if you will give them assurance that you will stand between them and loss. I didn't like to tell them the whole story, so I came to you."

The trader thought the matter over, and finally agreed to do as requested. So he packed up his valise; cleaned his pistols; sharpened his heavy hunting-knife; and started down to the river with his friend.

No man from up the river was known better in New Orleans than was the old trader, Jabez Hornbeck; and Crampton and Dunmore knew him so well, that they would have trusted him with half a million, so far as his means were concerned; so when the old man gave them his pledge that he would be responsible legally to them for any shortcomings of Huntley, they went before the court, and gave their names, and assumed the requisite responsibility.

As soon as the property had been placed in Christopher Huntley's hands, he advertised all the real estate for sale. At an appointed time it was to be sold at auction, if not disposed of before at private sale. On the very next day after the notice appeared, the guardian received an offer of fifty thousand dollars. This was more than he had expected, by some five thousand dollars. But he was careful. He would not give an answer then. An hour afterwards came another offer of the same amount, which swelled to fifty-five thousand before the applicant left.

On the next day, Christopher made some inquiries, and learned that the locality of his brother's hotel, or dwelling, which was a regular chateau, surrounded by a beautiful garden, was one of the most desirable residences in the suburbs. After this, he was more exorbitant in his demands, and finally sold it for sixty-five thousand dollars, there being a few lots in the city included in the estate.

The guardian's next movement was to draw the funds from the bank—just two hundred thousand dollars—and take drafts on New York; and thus prepared, with two hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars in ready money, or what was the same, he started for New York.

It was a cold, blustering day, early in December, when Christopher Huntley landed in New York city. His first movement was to the bank, where he generally did business, and where he now deposited the fortune he had brought on, the officers taking it upon themselves to see that the drafts were cashed.

The guardian's next movement was to the tumble-down building just out from Wall-street. He found Barrabas Lattimore in, and alone; and having locked the door he sat down and told the story of success.

"Bravo!" cried the attorney, as his *client* concluded. "The work goes bravely on, as somebody said once. It was a poet, I think."

"Well—never mind about your poets now," resumed Huntley. "Tell me about what you have been doing."

"Me? I've had nothing to do for you."

"But you said you'd have it all prepared for the disposition of those two black wenches by the time I came back."

"O—yes. But I could do nothing only think, you know."

"And have you thought of anything?"

"Yes, sir. I have the plan all ready for immediate use."

"Aha!" uttered Christopher, giving his chair an emphatic, happy movement. "That's good. Let's have it."

"My plan includes the whole work," added Barrabas.

"Eh? What whole?"

"Why—not only the removal of the girls, but of the young heir, too. I've got the plan fixed for the whole thing."

"Precious counsellor and attorney-at-law, let me have thy ponderings."

"Then look ye: First—I've got an excellent physician. Aye—a *most* excellent one."

"A physician? What in the name of Thomas Jefferson do you want of a physician?"

"Don't ye see?"

"No—I'm blamed if I do."

"Can't ye see any use?"

"Just open your budget, and let me have something to see."

"Then listen: Poor boy—Bion Huntley—since death of mother—pined away—fearful consumption set in—can't live—strange case—hasn't eaten hearty meal since mother died—pale—wasting all away—best of physicians—but can't live! D'ye see?"

"But suppose people come to see for themselves?" queried the guardian eagerly; for the disjointed utterances of the attorney had opened part of an excellent plan to his mind.

"Then they'll see it just as we've published it," returned Lattimore, with a knowing shake of the ugly head. "Excellent physician is one of our sort—trust him anywhere—hundred dollars will buy all his ingenuity."

"Who is he? Respectable? Will he pass?"

"Yes—one of the finest looking men in the city if he's dressed up—but he's out at the elbows now. Even his uncle, the Jew, has forsaken him. Drink—gambling—women—wine—horses—ruin! Nature made a decent man—society made a villain. Give him a new suit of clothes—hundred dollars—get him to promise sober for a month, and then we'll pay him more. You must put something in the boy's food or drink—he'll be sick—send for *our* doctor, and he'll be sicker—then he'll visit—look wise, ye know—prescribe, and put up his own medicines—boy will grow weaker and weaker. Then we'll publish first notice of 'strange and melancholy case of sympathy in a child.' Doctor goes on—boy grows weaker—finally the grand finale finishes up."

"Ha!" cried the uncle, seizing the old shark by the arm. "Do you mean to poison the boy?—*murder him?*"

"No, no. Our doctor couldn't be hired to do that. Only condition on which he'll touch it—he shall have charge of the boy until he puts him on his pegs again. Look—boy—sick—dying—by 'm by the two wenches lugged off at night and locked up somewhere. Boy grows sicker fast—find dead boy somewhere in haunts of poverty—buy it—put it in coffin—label it, '*Bion Huntley.*' Put in papers '*Melancholy Death!*' If the boy looks near enough like Bion bring back wenches and let 'em see him. Bion is with a friend of mine getting better all this while."

"Good!" whispered Christopher, deeply and thoughtfully. "But we must move Bion from where he is now first."

"Of course you must. We must have him where no knowing eyes are about."

"And you can do all this?"

"Very easily."

"And your doctor is to be trusted?"

"The very soul of honor.

"Good. Now when will we begin?"

"The sooner the better. You'd better have the boy moved at once."

"But we must have some safe place—some place where we can feel secure."

"I can take you to such a place this very evening."

"Then I'll be here. Or, suppose you meet me at the eating cellar where we took our last meal together?"

"Yes—I'll meet you there at half-past five."

"I'll be there."

With this Mr. Huntley left the attorney and proceeded to the house in Church-street, where his nephew was boarding. The boy had recovered something of his usual spirit, but the peculiar childishness was gone, and his movements and speech seemed to belong to a mind of mature thought and perception. He received his uncle politely, but coldly, and with a perceptible shudder. He asked after some of the people whom he remembered in New Orleans; and also hoped his uncle had a pleasant voyage.

"Well, Bion," said the guardian, "I have been looking for a house, and I think I have found one which will suit us. We will move in soon, and remain there until your father comes home."

"Where is it?" the boy asked.

"I don't know which one I shall take yet, my child."

"I hope you will find a pleasant one, for of course I shall not consent to live in a poor place."

Christopher Huntley started at this speech, and an uneasy look rested upon his face. But he concealed it as quickly as possible, for he saw the large, brown eyes of the child fixed searchingly upon him.

"I will find a good place," he said; "so you may rest easy upon that point."

The uncle did not feel easy in the presence of his victim; and he saw very plainly that the feeling was mutual; so he withdrew as soon as he had made known his plans.

At the appointed hour the two confederates met at the eating-cellar, and found a stall out of the way of eavesdroppers.

"You look blue," remarked Lattimore, as the other poured out a glass of wine, and then pushed the bottle over.

"Do I?" returned Huntley, without betraying any surprise.

"You do, most certainly. What's turned up?"

"I'll tell you," resumed the guardian, setting down his glass. "That confounded boy is altogether too old. You'd think to hear him talk, he was a man grown. He has an eye to business as keen as you please, and expresses his opinions as readily as you or I would. By the pipe o' peace, I'm afraid he won't forget all this when he grows up. Why—he asked after people in New Orleans just as though he had some important business with them. He's too bright by an immense deal."

"And yet you have no reason to complain. But say—*he may die!*"

Huntley started, and passed his hand across his brow.

"No, no," he said. "I can't do that."

"You misunderstand me," rejoined the attorney. "I had no thought of *that*. What I meant was this; Such children don't generally live long. Didn't ye ever notice it. Some people wonder why so bright children are shuffled off so quickly; but it is perfectly natural. Great head—hard working mind—too much for the body—wears it out. D'ye understand?"

"Ah—yes—I see now."

"But still," added Lattimore, "I don't share in your apprehensions. I believe if the boy is taken now—or within a month—and placed under the charge of some one who will labor steadily and persistently to impress upon him a false theory of his parentage he will forget all about his present knowledge. Don't be uneasy on that score. I'll find you a person who'll take the boy at a very reasonable price, and engage to drive every particle of distinct idea out of his head."

"Are you confident?" asked Huntley, eagerly.

"Yes—I am. You are not the first one who has had this kind of work to do. Let me explain,—or, rather, let me relate a case as I had it from a friend: A boy, at the age of six years, was taken from a home of wealth and ease, and placed with a woman who understood her business. She wished to have the boy brought up to believe that his parents were poor, and had died when he was an infant; and that he had then been taken and kept a few years by a person named Jones. The name of his parents was Judson. The woman let him rest awhile, and then commenced to divert his mind from the memory of his early life. At the end of a year she began to tell him about his parents that died so long before, and so on. At first he denied it; but by and by she shook his confidence, and finally, by keeping the invented story before him continually, she brought him to believe all she wished. There is no trouble, sir."

Christopher Huntley felt more easy after this assurance; and when he retired to his rest that night he felt his fingers already closing upon the wealth of his lost brother!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

Mourners.—It is surprising that a regulation has not been made to exclude persons in the garb of mourning from scenes of gaiety, lest the sombre hue of their dress give rise to sadness; but probably the omission has proceeded from a consciousness, that the spectators are as little moved by the trappings of grief as the wearers by the sentiment.

◆

Age.—It is strange that when youth gives us the prospect of a long life, we seldom think of rationally providing for its enjoyment; but when the term of it has been abridged by the flight of its best years, we become anxious to secure the comforts of the brief portion that remains to us.

◆

Love and Vanity.—Half the errors attributed to love have their source in vanity; and many a person has made sacrifices to this unworthy passion, who would have successfully resisted pleadings of affection.

NO FORGETFULNESS.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

Unrest forever! First a tranquil home,
'Mid waving woods and birds and fragrant flowers,
Where no rude sound from man's cold world could come
To break the dreamy stillness of the hours;
Then to the crowd, the many brilliant lights—
The thrilling music and the flushing wine,
The fair young forms whose beauty so invites,
Thou'st fled—wealth, power, and fame have all been thine;
Then, muttering: "'Tis in vain, all, all in vain!"
I've seen thee turn away with weary heart and brain.

Greece and Italia, with their classic charms,
Watched by sad spirits of the ages gone—
With mourning glories in their clasping arms—
In story's starlight have before thee shone.
Thou'st seen the ruins of chivalric years
Fling solemn shades by the romantic Rhine—
Ay, the voluptuous beauty that endears
In Orient lands has met that gaze of thine.
From scene to scene most madly thou hast fled,
And coldly cursed thy fate and called upon—the dead!

Thou'st heard the wildness of the mountain blast
Call to the pine trees at the midnight hour—
The avalanche's echoed crash has past,
And thou hast felt not their terrific power.
Thou'st wandered wearily o'er ocean's waves
In many a bark to many a storied shore,
And sought strange secrets from the genii's caves,
Whose whispers only said: "No more, no more!"
Thou'st bent above Niagara's stormy spray—
Did its eternal roar drive that wild thought away?

Far through the starry sadness of the night,
With poet-reverence thou hast sent thy sighs,
And mused the while on forms of breathing light,
Whose love and glory wait beyond the skies.
Then mid the chaos of the storm thou'st stood,
The thought of thine existence there to lose—
But in thy vast heart's sighing solitude
That memory lived beneath its poisoned dews!
Has aught the power to exorcise regret?
Have you forgot? Alas, and can you e'er forget?

◆

WHAT JOHN DE FOREST LOST.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

CHAPTER I.

"Don't, Helen."

"Don't what, mother?"

The belle of New York looked carelessly over her shoulder as she stood before the pier glass in the drawing-room, arranging the strings of her bonnet, and made this answer to a tall haughty-looking woman, who had just entered.

"You know very well what I mean," said Mrs. Archer, with a toss of her head. "Where are you going now?"

The young lady turned her back upon the glass, and answered indifferently—

"To Grace Armstrong's."

"And after that?"

"Down Broadway.

"And after that, Miss?"

"To Thompson's, perhaps, to eat an ice," and the wilful lips quivered with a suppressed smile.

Mrs. Archer saw it, and grew severe in offended majesty.

"And after that, Miss Helen, I suppose you will both visit John De Forest, in his studio. Studio indeed! I wish every man who presumes to set up such a place was put in the Tombs! Do you and Grace Armstrong intend to finish your morning there? Why don't you speak, Miss Archer?"

"It is barely possible—or rather—it is very probable—we may," said her daughter, trifling with the fastening of her glove. "And why not? Every one does go there—why should not we?"

"Very true—but every one does not go there *as* you do; and every one does not have such remarks made about them, either."

"What do you mean, mother?"

"Fancy my feelings when that horrid old wretch, Colonel Daggart, came up to me last night at the party, and congratulated me on your approaching marriage with the "distinguished young artist," as he called him! Right before Mr. Creverton, too—the last man on earth I would have imagine such a thing."

There was a tender mellow light in the large dark orbs of Helen, as her mother spoke, that made them even more beautiful than before. If John De Forest could but have copied that glance in his portrait of her, which had been hung in her mother's dressing-room only the week before! But the eyes there, were cold and proud, and dazzlingly bright—that was all.

"I hope you are above listening to any such reports, mother, or being worried by them," she said, as she glided to the door, with a dreamy smile softening her brilliant face. "It is the fashion, you know, to go to John De Forest's studio, as it is to go to the opera—and I obey my empress."

She waved her hand and left the room.

"I knew," said the proud mother, as from the window she watched her darling step into the carriage and ride away. "I knew it must be a mistake. She does not care for him, and they will all believe it, by and by, when she marries Mr. Creverton. What diamonds she will have, and how splendidly she will become them!"

While Mrs. Archer was speculating upon the future of her darling, the young artist, John De Forest, was busily at work in his studio. He was dressed in a loose robe of velvet fastened at the waist with a cord, and a velvet smoking-cap perched upon one side of his head, and making a kind of crown to his long fair hair. He often laughed about this theatrical costume.

"But people expect it—it is their idea of an artist," he said, one day to Miss Archer. "You yourself would be horrified to see me at work in an old linen coat, ragged and out at the elbows. Yet it is the correct painter's costume—rather than this frippery."

Miss Archer certainly did prefer the velvet dressing-gown, and thought the fair hair, the beard and moustache, much better set off by its rich dark folds, than they would have been by the linen coat. And on this day, as she entered, she stopped in the doorway, and held Grace Armstrong back for a moment, while he was yet absorbed in his work, that she might study him as she would have studied one of his pictures.

Some subtle intuition made him aware of their presence. He shook the fair hair from his face, and came up to meet them with a frank smile that showed the friendly terms existing between them better than words could express them.

"Ladies," he said, gaily—"I thought the sunshine had deserted me wholly this morning, but I am most heartily glad to find my mistake. I needed more light."

"Pray, don't make any of your fine speeches to us," said Grace, flitting round the studio like a spirit. "We are far too old acquaintances to be complimented. Come here and show us what you have been doing to my favorite landscape here."

He went—after a few brief words exchanged with Helen, who was never more than the brilliant and beautiful belle in his presence. Left alone, she came towards the easel, and looked long and earnestly at the picture upon it, half contemptuous and half angry curled her lip as she gazed.

It was a pretty face, with smooth, unmeaning features. The low white brow gleamed out from a profusion of flaxen ringlets, like snow; the eyes were blue, light, clear, and well-shaped; the cheeks oval and softly tinted, and the mouth half open, smiling, and disclosing a set of small pearly teeth that would have driven a dentist frantic with envy. A look of innocent wonder overspread the whole countenance, as if the eyes were seeing, for the first time, some new and rare delight. Underneath the frame, a card had been slipped, bearing the words—"Miss Lily Van Deusen—Staten Island. April 14th, 1854."

Helen read the pencilled words, and pondered over them and the portrait long. Some inexplicable presentiment of evil haunted her, connected with that pretty, but passionless face. She glanced from it to the dark beautiful countenance, full of pride and ire, that smiled upon her from the mirror in front of her. Could a comparison be made between them? As she asked herself the question, the artist stood by her side.

"You are looking at the picture," he said, in a low voice. "Will you tell me what you think about it?"

"It is a pretty face," said Helen, quietly.

"Pretty! Miss Archer you are surely jesting! Pretty! It is lovely! It is angelic! It is the face of an angel!"

He stopped short, and colored, seeing her start of surprise at his sudden outbreak. Grace Armstrong, who had joined them, laughed heartily at his embarrassed air.

"You have discovered the secret, Mr. De Forest, and you may as well make a clean breast of it," she said gaily. "Or shall I do so for you?"

The artist smiled good naturedly.

"I always intended to tell Miss Archer of my good fortune, and lest she should think I have suddenly grown mad, perhaps I had better do so now."

Helen guessed the truth instinctively, and felt herself turning pale and faint. By a strong effort, however, she overmastered herself and listened quietly while Grace rattled on.

"You know, of course, who this is, Helen?"

"Yes—your cousin—Lily Van Deusen."

"Exactly. Well, one day—let me see when was it—oh, April 14th, 1854," she continued, referring to the card, "this young gentleman who stands blushing here before you, met her at Staten Island. He took it into his head to fall desperately in love with her, and she with him. But fate, and a stupid old guardian, separated them till this happy winter, when they met in New York. At once, the old attachment was renewed—they said a thousand pretty things to each other—and the consequence is, as the play says, they will be married this fall, "wind and weather permitting." There, John—cousin John, I have spared your blushes, and told the whole story much more easily than you would have done. Now, Helen, begin your congratulations as soon as you please, only finish them as soon, for we have to go to Thompson's yet, before going home, and I have a most unlady-like appetite, I am sorry to say."

It was well for Helen Archer that the playful speech had been so long, and that the attention of both had been turned another way. She had heard the tidings with a hushed and aching heart. Well she knew all the young artist had been to her, and all she had hoped he would be. Her proud spirit writhed against the indignity he was unconsciously heaping upon her, in preferring another to her. She turned sick as she thought of the idle reports that had coupled her name with his—of her frequent visits to his studio—of the dreams she had dreamed of him—of the flower she had given him for her hair, one day, at his request—of a thousand things, innocent enough in themselves, but shameful and humiliating to the last degree, to one so proud, when unsought and unvalued. It was a bitter cup, but she drained it to the dregs. The fancy she had felt for him—the love, (if it may be called by that name,) she had cherished, might soon be crushed—but the knowledge that she had stooped to bestow it upon one who neither knew of, or cared for the gift, would be like gall and wormwood to her for years.

Little of all this storm of feeling could be traced in her haughty face, when she turned to the artist again.

"It is a pretty story, and I congratulate you," she said, coldly. "I hope to see Miss Van Deusen herself soon."

"She will be at Mrs. Grant's to-night, with my cousin," said De Forest, eagerly.

"Very well. You must give me the introduction yourself; remember that. Now, good morning."

He took the hand she extended, and looked up into her beautiful dark eyes. Something then seemed to startle him, but before he could question her, by look or word, she was gone!

That night he fulfilled his promise. Helen Archer, radiant in diamonds, stood beside the fair-faced Lily, and bit her lip with rage and scorn to find herself eclipsed by so puny a rival. She stood within the shadow of the heavy drapery that shaded the window, and watched them as they moved away. A slender, elegantly dressed man, with cold, hazel eyes, and an abundance of chestnut hair, came and stood beside her. It was Mr. Creverton, the Southern millionaire, for whom her mother designed her. She was usually cold and courteous to him, but now she met him with a smile of welcome that bewildered him.

"I have been talking with your mother," he stammered. "Oh, Miss Archer, if you would only be half as kind as she!"

"The fates are never propitious, if we do not try them," said Helen, while the glow on her cheeks deepened, and her eyes sparkled like her diamonds.

"Helen—Miss Archer! can I believe my ears? Is it possible that I may dare hope?"

"For what, Mr. Creverton?" she said, with the same bright smile.

"For this fair hand, dearest Helen. I would serve for it as Jacob served, if you would only promise it might be mine at last. Oh, Helen, do not refuse me."

She looked out from the quiet nook in which they stood. John De Forest was not far away, but he was not searching for her. He was bending over Lily's chair, fanning her, while she looked up now and then in his eager, handsome face, with a wondering smile, at his evident devotion. That sight stung and decided her. She drew the snowy glove from her hand, and laid it with a languid grace in that of Mr. Creverton.

No one was surprised at the announcement which the delighted Mrs. Archer soon made of the engagement. Every one considered it "just the match" for the haughty and beautiful belle. But John De Forest, hearing the news in his quiet studio, grew strangely restless, and looked wretched all the morning, through mere force of habit, for the face he knew he should never see there any more. The look he had seen in her eyes haunted him, in spite of himself. He tried to finish the portrait of his Lily, and threw down his pencil in despair. There seemed to have been some great mistake made—yet where he could not tell. For he was blind—blind—and was only dimly conscious, as a blind man would be, of the precious treasure he had never found—and yet which he had lost, forever!

CHAPTER II.

Old Time works strange wonders with us all. He took Helen from her home, and whirled her through the gay *salons* of Paris, and the marble palaces of Italy. He heightened her brilliant color, and the flashing of her large, dark eyes—he made her more beautiful—more brilliant—more bewitching—but he also made her colder and more heartless, and that had well nigh spoiled all. She often smiled covertly to herself at her romantic folly of the year before—and wondered—woman of the world as she was—how she could ever have thought of such a ridiculous thing as love. So, armed and prepared against all glances of John De Forest's beautiful blue eyes, she came home with the gay party who had accompanied her, and prepared for another campaign of gaiety in New York.

And how had Time served the young artist. On the morning of which I write, he sat again in his studio, and again before him was the picture of Lily. But the studio was dusty and dark, and he no longer did penance in the gaudy velvet robe, but was stretched out on the sofa, very much at his ease, in the old linen coat, smoking, and looking at the picture. It was very evident that the bright robes of ladies no longer glanced to and fro among his pictures—it was also as evident that he had grown soured, disappointed, and less enthusiastic in all things.

The reason of this change can be given in a word. He had been "jilted" by the fair Lily—and had turned misanthrope, and railed against and foreswore the sex, as all disappointed lovers are very apt to do—till they see some new divinity and forget the old one.

The door of the studio opened, and a good natured, handsome face, surrounded by a profusion of curly, black hair, looked in. The face belonged to a harum-scarum, fine-souled, but boyish young gentleman, known every where and to every one, by the name of Charley Braistow, and the pet and favorite of every fashionable lady in New York.

"Good morning, John," he shouted, in a mellow voice as he entered. "What in the world are you doing with that thing?" and he pointed to the picture on the easel. "I thought you were done with all that kind of nonsense long ago."

"So I am, Charley—so I am," replied the artist, pushing a chair towards the new comer with his foot. "Take a seat and a cigar. I was just looking at that face, and thinking what confounded fools we make of ourselves. One year ago I could have sworn my life away on the truth of that woman—and now—faugh!"

"I saw her just now," said Charley, taking a long whiff at his cigar. "She was walking down Broadway, and who do you think was with her?"

"Her husband?"

"Not he. Mrs. Masters has better taste than that, you may well believe. Her carriage, coachman, footman and all, were following her at a snail's pace, while she was walking with Warrington—who, as you well know is called the handsomest man in New York!"

"And the greatest scoundrel."

"May be so," said Charley, shrugging his shoulders. "But if every man that walked down Broadway with a lady was obliged to bring a certificate of his good behavior, I'm afraid a great many of us would be obliged to stay at home."

De Forest smiled, and put the picture of Lily away in a dark corner of his studio. Charley looked after him, thoughtfully.

"If you have turned her out of your mind as well, we will talk about something else," he said, as his friend came back to his seat.

"Go on."

"You know the Archers have returned."

"Yes. And I have a card here, somewhere, for the grand party there to-morrow night."

He did not add how much this remembrance on the part of Helen had pleased him, or that the card was then lying in his breast pocket, and most suspiciously near his heart, but it was so.

"I dropped in to see if you were going—and to make arrangements for a whist party afterwards at my rooms," said Charley, throwing his cigar away.

"I'll say yes, to both questions if you will tell me more of them. You have called there, of course."

"Oh yes. Helen and I used to be firm friends, you know. She was one of my old sweethearts I believe."

"Ah! And how is she looking now?" asked De Forest, carelessly. "Beautiful as ever?"

"Beautiful! I believe you!" said Charley, with an emphatic gesture of approbation. "Why, she looks like a young queen. But one thing I cannot understand. She has grown cold, and distant, and haughty—even to me. A more thorough woman of the world cannot well be imagined. If I had not always known her, I should say she had been "disappointed," as we call it. But every one who has ever seen Helen knows that it is all nonsense!"

"Of course," said De Forest. But as he spoke, like a flash of lightning came up over his memory, the scene in his studio over which he had pondered. He looked in her eyes when he told her of his engagement to Lily Van Deusen! Could it be that she had loved him, and that this had changed her so! The thought bewildered him, and he hid his face in his hands and tried to think. Charley stood and looked at him with a puzzled air.

"Are you apt to be taken in that way?" he asked, sarcastically. "Because if you are going to give me a glimpse of tragedy, I'll be off. I don't see what you have got to do with Helen's—you *don't* mean to say she was in love with you, John!"

The artist blushed like a girl.

"No, Charley—but I was in love with her," he answered, determined to screen her from every suspicion. I'll tell you all about it sometime."

"Oh, well, I'll be off," said Charley, who hated romance and "scenes." "But don't forget the whist party to-night—there's a good fellow."

"I won't, indeed."

Charley vanished from the room, to the tune of "Pop goes the weasel," and the artist throwing himself back upon the sofa, dreamed and wondered if it could really be possible that Helen had loved him. That glance seemed to say "yes," though her silence and absence answered "no." It was too sweet a delusion to reject, and, acting under its influence, he sat down to his writing desk, and made a greater simpleton of himself than he had ever done before.

The note he penned was delivered to Helen by her maid, when she entered her dressing-room, that evening, and ran as follows:

> "Helen—You have returned at last, and I may speak what I have often thought. What you are and might be to me, you can never dream till I have told you. If it is not too late for me to speak of my love for you—if you will hear me—wear the little token I send to-night, and I shall know how to interpret it. De Forest."

A smile parted her lips as she flung the note aside, and glanced at her attendant, who held the box which had accompanied the note. She lifted the cover carelessly. Here, upon a bed of rose-colored satin, lay a violet of precious stones—the counterpart of a flower she had once given him, from her hair, more than a year before. The proud beauty blushed and turned away with an impatient gesture. She hated to be reminded of her past folly, even by such little things as these. And yet, when the skilful hands of Elise had accomplished their task, and she stood robed in queenly magnificence, before the glass, she took the little flower from its resting-place, and let it glitter in the folds of her glossy hair.

"I believe I am not quite cured yet," she said to herself, with a cold laugh, as she descended the stairs, and entered the magnificent rooms that had been thrown open to receive her guests.

All the fashionable world was there. Old friends crowded around her as the evening wore away, but still he came not, and her cheeks flushed, and her dark eyes sparkled with vexation.

"You are looking radiantly, *ma belle*," whispered Creverton in her ear, as he bent down to pick up her fan. She thanked him with a smile—and then—she saw De Forest before her! On one side of her stood Lily Masters flirting with her handsome friend, while her imbecile husband looked on stupidly—but the artist had only eyes and thoughts for Helen, and bowed slightly and passed by his early love to stand before her.

She bore the meeting well, for she had been schooling herself for it long. Not so the artist. His voice faltered—his cheek paled as he touched her hand, and when he saw that she wore his flower in her hair, a deep flush rose to his very temples. With graceful ease she covered his embarrassment, and dismissing the group of friends around her, one by one, fanned herself languidly while she chatted, first to him, and then to Creverton, who still remained. But De Forest was too anxious and ill at ease to join the conversation, and at last she took pity on him.

"It is really too warm here," she said, with an exhausted air. "Mr. Creverton, is there no way of getting the windows open?—it makes one faint."

"I will go and see."

"Do so," she answered, watching him as he departed, with a laughing light in her eyes. De Forest at once took advantage of the opportunity she had given him.

"It is cooler in the music-room, and there are fewer people there," he said, with a trembling voice, as he leaned over her chair. "Shall I have the pleasure of escorting you there?"

She rose, took his arm, and went slowly through the crowd with an air of well-bred languor and indifference that made him fear for the success of his suit. The music-room was almost deserted, and Helen sat down in the embrasure of a window, and made him a place by her side.

"Helen," he said, eagerly, "you wear my flower?"

"Yes—it is a pretty little toy," she answered, carelessly.

He would not be discouraged.

"Helen, how beautiful you have grown. If you would only sit for a portrait to me now, I should immortalize myself."

She smiled scornfully.

"Mr. De Forest, if you remember me one year ago, you must know that I did not fancy compliments then. I have not altered in that respect now."

"But you have altered in everything else!" he exclaimed, stung by her coldness. "I can see no trace of the woman I knew—and yet I love you, Helen—I love you better than life!"

"Better than you loved Lily?" she asked, with a smile.

"You do well to remind me of that," he said, bitterly. "Yes, I love you far better than I ever loved her. Helen, if you look at me like that—speak and tell me that you are not trifling with me."

"They say I have no heart, Mr. De Forest," she answered, with a smile. "I begin to believe it, since even so handsome and devoted a lover has failed to move it. Did you talk to Lily in this way?"

"Helen! Helen!" he gasped, white with rage. "Will you tell me what you mean by this? Will you tell me why you consented to hear me, knowing well what I must have to say?"

"I thought it best to tell you myself what you will soon hear," she said, coldly; "and so I came here with you. In one week I am to be married to Mr. Creverton!"

She eyed him from under her long lashes, and saw by his deadly pallor how her blow had struck. She was repaid for all he had ever made her suffer, and her heart began to upbraid her for her deception.

"But that need not prevent our being friends!" she said, more kindly. "Take our favorite flower as a pledge of peace."

She took the jewelled violet from her hair, and twining a spray of arbutus with it, laid it before him. He swept it to the floor, and crushed it beneath his foot, with a bitter smile.

"So perish every vestige of my faith in woman!"

She looked at him in wonder.

"Miss Archer," he continued, "you have taught me a lesson I can never forget. If it is any consolation to you, be assured that you have made me as wretched as your proud heart can wish. But remember, also, that I now know the motive. *You loved me once!* Farewell!"

Without another word he left her. Half an hour later he was the life of the select bachelor circle in Charley's rooms, and Helen stood among her guests, brilliant and witty as ever. She is a wife now, and lives in the elegant house of Mr. Creverton, while John De Forest is a confirmed bachelor, and a satirist of the fair sex. They meet often in society, and quick retorts and sharp repartees are always passing between them—but those who listen and admire, and laugh, guess little how much deep feeling lies in every careless word, or how different a destiny might once have been theirs, but for one fatal mistake!

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COMFORTS OF RELIGION.

As to all the intricacies and vicissitudes, under which men are ordinarily entangled with the utmost sorrow and passion, one who is devoted to heaven, when he falls into such difficulties, is led by a clue through a labyrinth. As to this world, he does not pretend to skill in the mazes of it; but fixes his thoughts upon one certainty, that he shall soon be out of it. And we may ask very boldly, what can be a more sure consolation than to have a hope in death? When men are arrived at thinking of their very dissolution with pleasure, how few things are there that can be terrible to them! Certainly, nothing can be dreadful to such spirits, but what would make death terrible to them, falsehood towards man, or impiety towards heaven. To such as these, as there are certainly many such, the gratification of innocent pleasures are doubled, even with reflections upon their imperfection. The disappointments which naturally attend the great promises we make ourselves in expected enjoyments, strike no damp upon [illegible] men, but only quicken their hopes of soon [illegible]ing joys which are too pure to admit of [illegible] or satiety.

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ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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PRIVATE MORALS IN PUBLIC LIFE.

More than once in our day have we heard it urged in regard to public men, local and national, that their private morality had nothing to do with their public life, and that society had no business to discuss the former to the prejudice of the latter. We totally dissent from such a doctrine. The people, who make up the body politic, have a vast deal at stake on the question of the private as well as the public morals of public men. The whole past life of these is, necessarily and justly, made the test of how far they are entitled to public confidence and respect. After Demosthenes had been corrupted to betray Athens by the bribe of a golden cup, could Athens be expected longer to repose confidence in his virtue? Were Demosthenes thereafter up for Athenian suffrages, ought he to win them, though his eloquence were more than mortal, and his genius without compeer? Or, should Athenians thereafter overlook, under any public circumstances, the corruption that had tarnished their orator's name and fame? No height of public place, no measure of genius, could save Lord Bacon from the public infamy due to his private and public misdeeds. He was justly execrated and overwhelmed by them.

The higher the position occupied or aspired to, in public as in private life, the closer and keener should be the scrutiny of those who grant or create the position. The press and public have everything to do with the lives and morals of men who seek to be their public representatives and servants. The character of the people and country is at stake in the matter, and their morals and intelligence may well be judged by those of their public favorites. The man of vicious private life cannot be expected, whatever his talent, to be virtuous and patriotic simply because elevated to public place and trust. He will, more or less, carry his private morals into his public life: Caligula and Nero had talent enough, but it was devilish, especially when spurred by their atrocious moral instincts and aptitudes. Marat was a man of tact and talent, but his moral nature made him a brute and a fiend.

The people are always safe when they elevate such men as Fabricus and Cincinnatus—men whose private lives are the guaranty of their public virtues. Men who are disreputable in private life we would hold disreputable in public life. We abhor the too common notion that man may be anything, politically, without staining his private character; we no less abominate the doctrine that a man may be anything and everything in private life, without, politically speaking, losing his claim to public respect. We know but one kind of morals, and that kind makes the bad man bad everywhere, and the good man good everywhere.

INDEPENDENCE DAY.

Eighty-one years ago the heroic fathers of our Republic declared this country free and independent forever, and sealed the Declaration with a pledge of their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. How bravely they wrought out that Declaration, and under what trials—what marchings with bleeding feet over frozen ground—what suffering from destitution and famine—what horrors of burning dwellings, tomahawk and scalping-knife, and sack, and massacre, we all have read and wept over. There is not a girl in the land but has hung over the history with a throbbing heart and tearful eyes, nor a boy but has felt his bosom swell with unspeakable emotion, and registered his secret vows, as he has read the bloody narrative. The names of the heroes and their battlefields, of the civil officers and their wise enactments, are familiar to every mind and dear to every heart. And at this anniversary time of the great Day, as we, freed from our toils and our cares, go forth to the enjoyment of the prosperity which under God we owe to those brave and self-denying old fathers, let us remember those whose bones lie scattered from Maine to Georgia mouldering beneath the sod of the battlefield, and hallowing their memory with a tear of gratitude, resolve that we too will so discharge the duties of our station, whether it be conspicuous or humble, that in after years our memories shall in like manner be embalmed in the hearts of admiring and grateful descendants.

Demoralization.—One of the most marked characteristics of our day is a reckless neglect of principles, and a rigid adherence to their semblance.

"DEAR MOTHER."

But just now our eye fell upon these precious words, the sole inscription of a stray scrap of paper on the desk of our "sanctum." Who wrote them, matters not—they may have been the heading of a letter, written, or one intended to be written, but thrown aside ere it was begun. Magical words—the tenderest and holiest of our tender, yet sturdy Saxon tongue, which, among all the tongues spoken, is pre-eminently rich in tender and loving words. Magical words—uttered by every son and daughter of man since Adam walked in paradise. Who cannot dwell upon them with the rapture of living love, or the delight of sacred remembrance? Dear Mother! It is the fond plaint of the helpless nurseling—the gushing cry of childhood and youth—the earnest utterance of manhood, and among the fairest memories of old age.

Dear Mother! Whether present or absent—and though absent or dead, yet ever-present—how have those words, inspired by the tie that links her most affectionately to the human race, rung over the earth in notes of joy and triumph, or in chords of sorrow and anguish. How have they brooded in the deep places of the heart, begetting the holiest emotions, the purest thoughts, the sweetest recollections. From the son, away on the deep, clasping her parting gift, the Bible, to his breast, or his own heavy hands to a fevered brow, how have the words, "Dear Mother," sped over lands and seas, until they found, and nestled, in the mother's heart. From the daughter, parted from her home by that other tender love, which bade her forsake father and mother to follow the young lord of her heart, how fondly the "Dear mother" has posted back to the home-hearth, burthened with the fragrance of affection. From beds of sickness, from goals of crime, from depths of misery, shame and remorse, how unceasingly have come up those precious words, "Dear Mother." How many a warrior's soul has breathed them out on the battle field; how many a felon has uttered them out from the prison-cell; how many a son and daughter have sped them joyfully to announce a fruition of desire, a goal of triumph

Whatever the path and whatever the fortune, the "Dear Mother" has shared, in all the destinies of her children. She has nursed them, she has trained them, she has been loved, and mourned, and remembered by them. The father may have lapsed from the child's memory, but the Mother, never! Humble or high, the tie has been equally tender. No soul could supplant her, no being fill her place. It was blood crying unto blood, with a deathless yearning—with a longing which no years could satiate. "Dear Mother," on earth or in heaven—and if not on earth, in heaven thou surely art, beautiful among the angels—to thee, thy love and thy virtues, may our hearts be eternal monuments. Enduring all, forgiving all, never hopeless, never wearied, but loving on and loving ever, amid sorrow and shame, as in joy, and gladness, and glory, thou art worthy of the fond phrase "Dear Mother"—worthy of the affection and reverence which have made thee an idol on the consecrated shrine of home, and wherever a human pulse throbs throughout the universe of God.

RISE AND FALL OF MAGAZINES.

There is no field of literary enterprise in which greater fluctuations occur than in the magazine business; nor, perhaps, is there any in which more stupidity and more tact are displayed. At present, we have specimens of both these extremes—"Harper" representing the tact and "Putnam" the stupidity. The latter magazine commenced with the best auguries of success; but, unfortunately, it soon fell under the control of a clique of conceited snobs, and from that day it has exhibited the usual signs of such a fate. Recently an attempt has been made to imitate "Harper" by introducing some wood-cuts into its pages, but this spasmodic effort has only served to *illustrate* still further its own stupidity. Besides, the public never sympathise with snobs and imitators, who have not the necessary brains to originate a respectable magazine of their own. The Putnamites ought to be original; but if they can't be original, they should not be mean, and, what is still worse, dull and heavy. We are not personally acquainted with the conductors of this monthly; but we detest imitators of all sorts, especially that paltry and unsuccessful brood who are always envious of other people's success, and are ever ready to imitate when they lack the ability to originate. Never steal another man's thunder.

CRIMINAL DISTINCTIONS.

If a man steals on a small scale, it is a prison offence; if he kills one man, it is a capital crime. We execrate the vulgar robber and murderer. The ovations we give such, are in the Penitentiary and at the rope's end. We pursue them up and down with all our constabulary force. But when a great highwayman appears, multitudes hail his advent, and proclaim his wholesale robberies and murders as so many deeds of a hero. It is this confusion of all proper sense of justice—this foully false award that has, from the beginning of time, stimulated ambition for the game of cut-throating and plunder known as war. Crime is crime, in spite of all the gaud and sophistry that may be thrown over it, and well will it be for the world when there are no such distinctions as vulgar crimes and heroic crimes. Let whoever plunders, whoever sheds innocent blood, whoever disturbs the peace of society, to gratify mercenary ends, whether selfish or not, bear the brand before God, and the reign of violence and terror would soon cease. In our land we have nursed an evil spirit by applauding deeds, which, having been done on a smaller scale, would have awarded their doers the doom of robbers and murderers. Let the reader make the application as shall seem to him most fit.

We take much pride and pleasure in calling attention to the fact that George D. Prentice, Esq., has become a poetical contributor to the Ledger in addition to the editing of its "Wit and Wisdom" department. Although Mr. Prentice is confessedly the most accomplished wit of the age, yet his incomparable achievements in this respect are but the mere *sparks* of his genius, and not its broad, and genial, and enduring flame, which best manifests itself in the freedom and scope of song. In the flowing measures of poetry all the exuberant goodness of heart, brilliancy of intellect and splendor of imagination for which he is so distinguished, have full scope for their exhibition, and render his performances in this field of literature well nigh unapproachable.

Politeness.—Nothing is more dissimilar than natural and acquired politeness. The first consists in a willing abnegation of self; the second in a compelled recollection of others.

Society.—Society rarely pardons those who have discovered the emptiness of its pleasures, and who can live independent of it and them.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

PEEPS AT PHILADELPHIA.

NUMBER ONE.

And this is Philadelphia! All hail, Philadelphia! Where a lady's aching fingers may be reprieved from the New York thraldom of skirt-holding off dirty pavements; where the women have the good taste, in dress, to eschew the gaudy tulip and array themselves like the lily; where hoops are unknown, or at least so modified as to become debateable ground; where lady shop-keepers know how to be civil to their own sex, and do not keep you standing on one leg an hour after you hand them a bill, while with hawk eye and extended forefinger they peruse that nuisance called the "Counterfeit Detector." Where the goods, not better than in New York, save in their more quiet hue, are never crammed down a customer's unwilling throat; where omnibus drivers do not expectorate into the coach-windows, or bang clouds of dust into your doomed eyes from the roof, thumping for your fare, or start their vehicles before female feet have taken leave of what has nearly proved to so many of us the *final* step! where the markets——— but hold! they deserve a paragraph by themselves.

Ye gods! what butter! Shall I ever again swallow the abominable concoction called butter in New York? That I—Fanny Fern—should have lived to this time, and never known the bliss of tasting Philadelphia butter!—never seen those golden pounds, each separately folded in its fresh green leaf, reposing so temptingly, and crying, eat me, so eloquently, from the snow white tubs! What have the Philadelphians done that they should be fed on such crisp vegetables, such fresh fruits, and such *creamy* ice-creams? That their fish should come dripping to their mouths from their native element. That their meat should wait to be carried home, instead of crawling by itself? Why should the most circumscribed and frugal of housekeepers, who goes with her snowy basket to buy her husband's dinner, be able to *daintyfy* his table with a fragrant sixpenny bouquet? Why should the strawberries be so big and dewy and luscious? Why should the peas and cauliflowers and asparagus and lettuce ——— Great Cæsar—what *have* the Philadelphians done that they should wallow in such high-stepping clover?

I have it!

It is the reward of virtue—*It is the smile of Heaven on men who are too chivalric to puff tobacco smoke in ladies faces which beautify and brighten their streets.* They deserve it—they deserve their lily-appareled wives and roly-poly, kissable, sensibly-dressed children. They deserve to walk up those undefiled marble-steps, into their blessed home-sanctuaries, overshadowed by those grand patriarchal trees. They deserve that their bright-eyed sons should be educated in a noble institution like "The Central High School," where pure ventilation and cheerfulness are considered of as much importance as mathematics or Greek and Latin. Where the placid brow and winning smile of the Principal are more potent auxiliaries then ferules or frowns. Give me the teacher on whose desk blooms the bouquet, culled by a loving pupil's fingers; whose eye, magnetic with kindness—whose voice, electric with love for his calling, wakes up into untiring action all that is best and noblest in the sympathetic, fresh young hearts before him. A *human* teacher, who recognizes in every boy before him (be he poorly or richly clad—be he glorious in form and face as a young Apollo, or cramped and dwarfed into unshapeliness in the narrow cradle of poverty) an immortal soul, clamorous with its craving needs, seeking the light, throwing out its luxuriant tendrils for something strong and kindly to cling to, longing for the upper air of expansion and strength. God bless the *human* teacher who recognizes, and *acts* as if he recognized this! Heaven multiply such schools as "The Philadelphia High School," with its efficient Principal, its able Professors and teachers, and its graduates who number by scores the noble and honored of the land, and of the sea.

———I love to linger in cemeteries. And so in company with an editorial friend, Col. Fitzgerald of the Philadelphia City Item, to whose hospitality, with that of his lovely wife, I am much indebted, I visited "Laurel Hill." The group "Old Mortality" at its entrance needs no praise of mine. The eye might linger long ere it wearied in gazing at it. I like cemeteries, but I like not elaborate monuments, or massive iron railings; a simple hedge—a simple head-stone, (where the tiny bird alights, ere like the parting spirit it plumes its wings for a heavenward flight), for its inscription—the words to which the universal heart has responded, and will respond till time shall be no longer—till the graves give up their dead; "Mother"—"Husband"—"Wife"—"Child"—what epitaph can improve this? what language more eloquently measure the height and breadth, and length and depth of sorrow?

And so, as I read these simple words at "Laurel Hill," my heart sympathised with those unallied to me, save by the common bond of bereavement; and thus I passed on—until I came to an Author's grave—no critic's pen again to sting that heart;—pulseless it must have been, not to have stirred with all the wealth of bud and blossom, waving tree and shining river, that lay bathed in the golden, summer sunlight above him. So, God willing, would *I* sleep at last; but not yet—not yet my pen, till thou hast shouted again and again—*Courage! Courage!*—to earth's down-trodden and weary-hearted.

Fanny Fern.

A TERRIBLE FATE.

A young lady, named Miss Mary Macnaughten, living in Grosvenor square, London, came to her death recently, in a most singular and shocking manner. While sitting in her father's drawing-room, engaged in reading, she rubbed her foot upon a lucifer match that had been accidentally dropped there, and which, igniting, set fire to the lower part of her garments. Miss Macnaughten, finding she could not extinguish the flames, screamed with terror. Her father and the chief butler of the mansion, hearing her cries, hastened to her assistance, and tried to extinguish the flames by compressing the unfortunate girl's garments; but, *owing to her hoops*, they found this impossible. The butler then rushed to procure a baize table-cover, which he threw over her—(the flames then streaming some three feet above her head,)—and thus, at last, succeeded in extinguishing the flames. But the relief came too late. The poor creature was terribly burned, from the sole of her feet to the crown of her head, and soon died.

This melancholy catastrophe gives rise to two reflections: First, had not some culpably careless person dropped the match on the floor, the unfortunate young lady's clothes would not have been set on fire. Secondly, had it not been for her hoops, the flames could have been extinguished in time to save her from serious injury.

AN IMPRESSIVE SCENE.

On hearing sentence pronounced, a few days ago, in the United States District Court, in this city, upon the three Spanish desperadoes, who, some time since, killed at sea the captain of the American ship, "The General Pierce," we were deeply impressed with the majesty of the law, when properly administered, and also with the terrible situation of the prisoners, in a strange land, surrounded with the paraphernalia and ministers of justice, conscious that their doom was being pronounced by the imposing man before whom they stood, and yet unable to understand a word of the language which he was speaking. The prisoners, who were dark, fierce and vindictive looking men, had been convicted of manslaughter on two separate indictments; and the judge sentenced them to hard labor in the penitentiary for three years, and one thousand dollars fine on each conviction, making their punishment six years in the penitentiary, and two thousand dollars fine, the imprisonment to continue until the fine is paid. The sentence was pronounced in a low, mild, but inflexible voice, which produced a thrilling effect; and this was much deepened when the interpreter repeated the sentence to the prisoners, in their own sonorous and majestic tongue. It came upon them with stunning effect, and they drew closer together, as if to ward off or repel their doom. By-and-bye they murmured together, and then one of them addressed the interpreter, who informed the Judge that the prisoners said they could not pay even a very small fine, that of course it would be impossible for them each to pay $2,000, and they would like to know the consequence of *not* paying it. "You will have to remain in prison until it is paid," (said the Judge, through the interpreter,) "unless the President of the United States shall see fit to remit it or pardon you; and, considering the atrocity of your crime, I feel it my duty to say to you that there is no probability that he will interfere to mitigate or shorten your punishment." This declaration seemed to crush the spirits of the homicides, and as the Marshal manacled them together, and led them from the room, they bowed their heads in utter despair.

OBEY THE LAW.

It is a very common thing to grumble and fret at the law's delay, and in times of excitement everybody is too apt to clamor for the immediate employment of overwhelming force to put down something or somebody—to crush whatever the object of popular resentment may happen to be; but, what man is there who, if *he* were an object of private prosecution or of public hostility, would not gladly entrench himself within the sacred precincts of the law, and ask for time to summon his witnesses, prepare his defence, and have his case fairly stated to twelve of his countrymen solemnly sworn to judge him impartially? Through loopholes in the law villains sometimes escape unwhipped of justice, it is true; but, is it not better thus, than that the innocent should be recklessly sacrificed? To give supremacy to a mob is to place weapons of death in the hands of a myriad-armed and ubiquitous maniac, who will slay on the right hand and on the left—blindly, mercilessly.

Our only safety, therefore, is in the inviolability of the judical shield which the State has thrown around us. The moment an overriding of the law is permitted for *any* purpose, a precedent is established for the overriding of it for *every* purpose; and instead of living under the safeguard of majestic and inexorable justice, which protects without violence and punishes with dignity, we shall be exposed to the uncertain caprices of wild revenge and infuriated passion. By taking the law into their own hands, on the pretext that justice will not be done in the judicial tribunals, people only impair the value of their own institutions, overthrow the defences of their own lives and property, and set an example of insubordination which, if more widely extended, would break down government and ultimately destroy civilization itself. When institutions of government are not what they should be, the duty of those who live under them is to reform them, not to render them still less entitled to respect by treating them with contemot.

HORRID CRUELTY.

The gensdarmes of the Commune of Chateauneuf in France, discovered some months since a boy seventeen years old, named Loret, confined in the corner of an old shed, almost without a roof, and lying upon a heap of straw, in such a disgusting state of filth that the smell of the place made them ill for some hours after. Here, the poor lad's father, instigated thereto by his second wife, had kept him all winter, without change of clothing, and with barely sufficient food to sustain life. In endeavoring to mitigate the cold, the boy had crouched in such a manner, and so long, his limbs had become so completely cramped that he lost the use of them. While he was lying in this wretched condition, his step-mother would visit the shed to rail at and load him with abuse. The tyrannical father and fiendish step-mother were arrested as soon as the boy was discovered, and confined in the public jail, while the victim of their inhumanity was carried to the hospital. A short time since, Loret and his wife were tried for their criminal conduct at Reinnes, convicted, and condemned to death. In this country they would probably have been acquitted, or in some way humbugged justice. We always feel a thrill of exultation on reading the certainty and speediness with which crime is punished in European countries.

AN "UNFORTUNATE" MAN.

An acquaintance of ours tells a good story concerning a family who were once neighbors of his, several years ago. The lady of the family was constantly pining to return home to London, whence they came to this country many years before; but her husband, she said, would not return, because his "*misfortunes*" had not yet been forgotten there. She harped so much on these "misfortunes" of her husband, that our friend at last asked what they were, when, to his infinite surprise, she told him, without the slightest embarrassment, that she referred to a *few forgeries*, in which her husband had been detected in that city. This gave our friend a new idea of what "misfortune" may be, and prepared him *not* to be surprised in case this "unfortunate" gentleman should not pay him several hundred dollars borrowed money—which he never did.

Pride and Poverty.—Pride and poverty are the most ill-assorted companions that can meet. They live in a state of continual warfare, and the sacrifices they exact from each other, like those claimed by enemies to establish a hollow peace, only serve to increase their discord.

Great Men.—Mountains appear more lofty, the nearer they are approached; but great men, to retain their altitude, must only be viewed from a distance.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—BY GEO. D. PRENTICE, ESQ., OF THE LOUISVILLE JOURNAL.

Several persons communicating with spirits have been recently commanded by them to eat nothing for several days. If spirits have neither stomach nor teeth, that's no good reason why they should be so ill-natured as to interfere with the comforts of those who are better off.

A testy editor wonders if we are not often frightened by the ghost of murdered truth. We do not think he is in any danger of such a fright. As he was never able to see the truth itself, he will hardly be able to discern its ghost.

A tippler who had an awful squint, used to express his regret that his eyes were not matches. "It is lucky for you that they are not," said his friend, "for, if they were, your nose would have set them on fire long ago."

"I owe you nothing," said an undutiful son to his father; "so far from having served me, you have always stood in my way, for if you had never been born, I should now be the next heir of my rich grandfather."

In hearing a political candidate describe the sort of representative that he thinks the people ought to have, we are always amused at the special pains he seems to be at to draw an exact portrait of himself.

There are two sorts of cats. We doubt the truth of the common saying that one of them has nine lives, but many a poor fellow's back can attest that the other has nine tails.

General Walker of Nicaragua, is generally considered the most obstinate man of the day. This is not much to be wondered at when we consider that the poor fellow has frequently had to live upon mule meat.

Niagara Falls seems likely to lose what has long been one of its most remarkable characteristics. The authorities there have determined to put a stop to the swindling practices of runners, solicitors, and hack drivers.

A young lady at Rochester became very ill from over exertion in jumping the rope. We have known several injure themselves seriously by over exertion in jumping at supposed chances to get married.

It is said that the fashion of inflating ladies' dresses has so far reversed the relative position of mistress and servant that it is now usually the lady's maid who blows the lady up.

A Texas politician, returning from a public meeting at Bastrop, walked into a well twenty-five feet deep. Truth is said to live in the bottom of a well. Here was a remarkable case of the pursuit of truth under difficulties.

A little girl, after attending a party, was asked by her mother how she enjoyed herself. "Oh," she said, "I am *full* of happiness. I couldn't be any happier unless I could grow."

A Judge in Indiana threatened to fine a lawyer for contempt of court. I have expressed no contempt for the court, said the lawyer; on the contrary I have carefully concealed my feelings.

An Alabama editor says, in an ill-natured paragraph, that he is "very unlike the gentleman of the Louisville Journal." The latter replies that he is probably very unlike *any* gentleman.

We think it is an undeniable truth that the Africans, let them go to what part of the world they may, retain more unequivocally than any other people the odor of nationality.

A paper calling itself literary and miscellaneous advertises that it intends to swallow up everything around it "like a great maelstroom." We have little doubt that it will prove a great "take in."

An editor says that he gives no heed to what we say—that our words go in at one ear and out at the other. We have no doubt of it. Things pass easily through a vacuum.

A bitter writer in a sectarian newspaper calls his opponent "a hypocrite and a hyena." There is some similarity between the two animals. One prays, and both prey.

A Western editor talks of giving in one of his columns, the fibs of his neighbor. We presume that the other thirty-five are to be filled with his own—as usual.

The question is discussed in some of the Missouri papers whether raising hemp is a good business. A much better business certainly than being raised by it.

If philanthropy is properly defined to be a love of mankind, we suppose that most women have an unequivocal title to be considered philanthropists.

Some folks think that their personal importance fills a large space in the public eye when it is all in their own.

A couple of old maids the other day sent a bachelor a bouquet of tansey and wormwood. He thought the gift considerably sweeter than either of the givers.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A little boy five years of age, living in Brooklyn, who was fond of "playing organ-grinder" with his little chair, or anything he could sling upon his back, happened a few days ago to break a mirror that was standing in the hall, by hitting his chair against it, whereupon his father seized the chair, and, striking the child with it over the head and shoulders, knocked him senseless upon the floor, and inflicted an injury which bids fair to result in the poor little fellow's death.

A man named Royce, living in Mississippi, and who has been for some time subject to fits of insanity, a short time since attempted to cut off his wife's ears with his razor; she resisted the attempt and screamed for help, whereupon Royce cut her throat before the servants could rescue her from his clutches.

A water snake three and a half feet long was removed from the stomach of a woman at Logansport, Ind., a few weeks ago. She supposes that she swallowed the reptile four years ago, while drinking from a spring in the night time, since which she has experienced excruciating pain in the stomach.

At a recent menagerie exhibition in Tennessee, as the keeper of the elephant was leading him around to drive back the auditors and "form a ring" for the pony and monkey performance, the huge brute stepped on the foot of a little girl, and crushed it to a jelly.

A traveler in Africa, states that one of the native kings, whose court he visited, regulates his household by the scales—weighing his eleven wives every month, and assigning them their positions according to their weight; the heaviest being placed in chief command.

It is said that there is a man in Rochester, N. Y., who will swallow stones at the rate of two cents apiece, as long as the spectators will pay for the exhibition. He often swallows fifty a day, and says they don't trouble him at all.

A German maniac at Milwaukee broke out the cell in which he was confined a few days since, in the county poor-house, and stabbed the overseer and three others before he could be secured.

About three weeks ago, a black man, living in Carthage, Miss., arose in the night, chopped off his wife's head with an axe, and then hung himself on a tree near his house.

A short time since a tornado swept over the southern part of Illinois which unroofed buildings, tore others from their foundations, and raised some in the air and dashed them into fragments.

At a ball recently given by the Emperor of France, at the Hotel de Ville, in Paris, the amount paid for the use of living flowers wherewith to deck the saloon exceeded ten thousand dollars.

An elderly gentleman recently exhibited in a car of the Boston and Cambridge railroad, an umbrella which he said he had owned for twenty-seven years. Nobody believed him.

A widow named Sarah Jane Gould was recently poisoned in Louisville, N.Y., by a school-teacher named Edwin Eldridge, who was engaged to be married to her.

The supply of strawberries this season is immense. A steamboat brought from Keyport, N. J., the other morning, a load which sold for over $6,500.

A young school-mistress, named Mary Goldthwait, committed suicide in Hartford, Conn., a few evenings since, by hanging;—cause, too much study.

The London Times says the amount of money invested in railroads in Great Britain is $1,500,000,000.

Men of Genius.—Men of genius, who hold out lights to mankind, are used by them as are the Moccoli bearers at the Roman Carnival by the populace; each of whom strives first to illume his torch in theirs, and then to extinguish it.

SONG.

BY ALICE CARY.

Away in the elf-land,
Away in the dream-land,
Unslipping the leashes of custom and fate,
There 'tis that lonely,
With spirit-arms only
I clasp close the love which I dared to create.

It never had being
Till I gave it being,
No heart of its riches my heart doth deprive,
For out of the treasures
Of unquickened pleasures
'Twas I that evoked it and made it alive.

And can it be sinful,
O, spirits of wisdom,
To slip thus the leashes of custom and fate,
And when I am lonely
With spirit-arms only
To clasp close the love which I dared to create

* * *

THE ISLAND PRINCESS.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,
Author of "The Lost Heiress," "The Deserted Wife," "The Missing Bride," "Retribution," etc.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER XII.

THE SKIPPER'S DAUGHTER.

"This should become a noble creature, she
Hath all the energy that should construct
A goodly whole of glorious elements,
If they be wisely mingled by her will." BYRON.

How gloriously the next day, arose the summer sun upon that green and blooming and odoriferous island!

Madame, from the rose-wreathed balcony of her front chamber window, looked out upon the delightful scene, as upon some poetic elysium, encircled by the crystal sea! It was indeed an enchanting vision! The whole Isle was carpetted with a brilliant green verdure, sparkling with dew-drops, and enamelled with flowers of every elegant form and beautiful color and delicious fragrance!—myriads upon myriads of roses, rose-bushes, rose-trees, and rose-vines—roses clustering, climbing, twisting and twining, everywhere—columns and colonades, piazzas, balconies, trellises, and arbors, all wreathed and covered and veiled and festooned with roses, that flushed all the green Isle with their intense and vivid blushes, and filled the air with their rich aroma! There were groves of ornamental trees of luxriant beauty and fragrance—the flowering almond with its delicate perfume, and soft white blossoms, seeming as if a fall of summer snow had lighted on its elegant tendrils; the lanton belle with its heavy shade and clustering purple tufts and odoriferous breath; the red-bud with its brilliant green foliage and scarlet-drops; the stately tulip-poplar, with its fiery hanging bells; the queenly catalpa, with its aromatic odor; the imperial magnolia, with its deep green, shining leaves, and "all Arabia's spices" in its pure white vase-like cups; orchards of peach, apple, cherry, apricot and plum-trees, all covered with their pink, white or variegated flowers; walks flanked with raspberries, gooseberries, and currant-bushes, all in full blossom. And, lastly, through the intervening branches of the fragrant flowering locusts that overhung the silvery sanded beach, gleamed the snow-white sails of the fairy barque, the "Sylph," that fluttered in the morning breeze like the wings of some beauteous sea-bird—beyond this flashed and sparkled the deep blue sea, and above all glowed the crimson, purple, and golden glory around the rising sun!

Madame had scarcely taken in this sublime, beautiful and enchanting vision, when Louis rapped at the chamber door and announced that the breakfast, the boat, and his master, all waited Madame's pleasure.

She descended to the breakfast parlor, where she found the table spread, and Monsieur Henri equipped for his journey.

And after the morning meal of rich coffee, delicate bread, fresh butter and eggs, and delicious fruit and cream, Monsieur Henri announced himself as waiting the orders of Madame, and gallantly conducted her to the barque.

The Sylph was a beautiful sail-boat, gaily painted green on the outside, and white and red within. Her deck and ropes and sails were clean and nice as a lady's face and hands and dress. From the mainmast streamed a snow-white pennant studded with the golden lilies of France.

Four negro sailors in neat straw hats, blue shirts and white trousers, stood on deck waiting commands. They doffed their hats to the master and the lady, as the two latter appeared.

Monsieur Henri assisted Madame to gain the deck, and seated her in a comfortable willow-chair under a canopy in the stern.

Louis placed himself at the helm, the four sailors manned the capstan, the anchor was weighed, the sails filled, and the Sylph floated out upon the blue and sparkling water.

As they sailed from the eastern extremity of the Island, they were obliged to "'bout ship" and make half the circuit of the Isle, in order to steer for the Northampton coast that lay off to the westward.

After a delightful sail of three hours they came in sight of the main land, with its rolling hills and valleys, and dark green woods and meadows.

A beautiful but solitary shore.

No house in all its length to be seen save one—an old, half ruined, grey stone mansion, standing far out upon a point of land extending into the sea, and half hidden by the ancient forest trees around it.

"That is Brande's Headland, where we are going ashore," said Monsieur Henri—walking forward and giving orders to the men to strike sail and cast anchor where they were.

A small skiff was then let down from the side of the barque, Monsieur Henri and Madame got into it, followed by Louis, who took the single oar and sculled rapidly towards the beach, which they reached in a few minutes.

Monsieur, still with the air of the Chevalier Bayard, or the Grand Monarque, handed Madame from the boat, drew her arm within his own, and with the aid of a gold-headed cane, began to help himself and her up the rugged ascent of the bank.

As they reached its top, and stood upon a level with the old, dilapidated house, some three or four wild looking, handsome, healthy boys ran out to see who was coming. Two great Newfoundland dogs that lay upon the broken, stone steps, sprang up, but were immediately restrained by the appearance of a very handsome, dark-haired girl of about thirteen years of age, who came to the front door, and laying a hand on the head of each favorite, said—

"Down, Wind! Down, Wave! Behave, boys! How dare you then? Don't you see it's Monsieur Henri?"

The dogs, still growling, unwillingly submitted, and the handsome brunette came down the old moss-grown steps to meet her visitors.

"Welcome Monsieur Henri! but you must forgive the dogs; they knew *you* of course; it was the strange lady they objected to," said the brown maiden, extending her hand to the old gentleman, who took and shook it cordially and held it cozily, while he said—

"Ah, Barbara Barbara still brighter than ever, my brave girl. Why, what a woman you are growing! And how is the old skipper? Eh, Barbara? And the handsome young mate? Eh, Barbara?"

The young girl laughed, displaying a row of the whitest and evenest teeth in striking contrast with her cherry lips, nut brown skin, and sloe black hair and eyes. She was too young and guileless to blush at such a question.

"The skipper is off again? Eh, Barbara?"

"Oh, yes, sir! with a cargo of flour to Habana. He will bring back West India sugar and molasses."

"Why, what a business woman you are, Babby! You know all about everything!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" exclaimed Barbara, laughing.

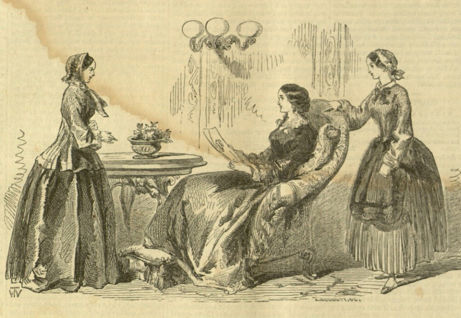
"And hark ye, Monsieur"—she said, mysteriously bending towards him and whispering so low that but the last words of her communication were heard—"for Madame."

"Oh! Barbara! Barbara! you shocking little smuggler! I ought to deliver you to the authorities!"

"No, no, Monsieur. They are for Madame—the sweetmeats," said the girl.

"For Madame? Very well. I have not presented you to Madame! I must do so!" he said, taking her hand with a droll formality, turning her about facing the lady, and continuing—

"Madame L'Orient, my sweetheart, Barbarie, the daughter of my brave Captain Brande, who owns and commands the good brig Kelpie, trading between this coast and the West Indies, the Bermudas, South America, England—anywhere! Ma belle Barbarie used to sail with the skipper in all his voyages, but now she stays home and takes care of the boys, while her father is at sea, and does a little in the smuggling line when he comes home—do you not?" he asked, playfully, chucking the girl under the chin.



INTERVIEW BETWEEN ESTELLE AND BARBARA BRANDE.

"No—no, Monsieur!"

"Mon Dieu! she has a hamper or so of West India sweetmeats hidden away, that has never seen the outside of a custom-house! but she does not dabble in smuggling! *she* does not! Eh, bien! She says they are for Madame, and we will excuse her and thank her."

"Will Monsieur and Madame come in and rest?" asked the maiden.

"No, no, my child—but can you let us have the old carry-all? We are going on to Eastville?"

"Oh, yes, Monsieur! Will you want me to drive?"

"No, my child; I have Louis with me, and if I had not—death of my life! do you suppose I would sit back at my ease, and allow you to hold the rein?"

"Monsieur is very polite, but he knows that I am accustomed to drive passengers from the coast to Eastville."

"Not when they are gentlemen, my pretty one! But, now! how soon can we have that carriage ready?"

"If you and Madame will walk in and sit down, I will put the horses to it directly."

"By no means, my little one! Direct my servant, Louis, where to find them—he will do it."

"But, Monsieur," said the girl, laughing, "if you patronize our house much, you will spoil me! I shall forget the use of my hands, and permit them to grow soft and white, like a lady's."

"The gallant young mate of the Kelpie will not object to that, my beauty!" said the old gentleman, who, looking around and seeing Louis coming up the bank, beckoned him to approach, and directed him to go to the stables, get the carriage out, put the horse to it and bring it around.

Louis bowed and went off towards a dilapidated pile of grey stone buildings, at some distance behind the dwelling-house, and which had probably long ago deserved the name of stables.

Since the visitors declined going into the house, Barbara ran in to bring out chairs for them.

While she was gone, Madame, looking around upon the desolate scene, and contrasting it mentally with the lovely island they had that morning left, exclaimed—

"What a ruinous, dilapidated old place! How can the owner allow a fine property like this to go to ruin?"

"Oh! I don't know! My good friend, Captain Brande, is fit for nothing but the waters! he nor his race! He belongs to that class of old sea dogs that have infested these coasts ever since their first settlement, and before! He married the heiress of all this property—Barbara's mother; she died, leaving him with Babby and her three little brothers. Babby has been a housekeeper for the father, and a mother for the children, which is as much as can be expected of her, poor child! But you see how the skipper has allowed the house to go to wreck and ruin."

"But do you tell me"—asked Madame—"do you mean to say that this young maiden stays here with these children day and night, without protection, in this most lonely and desolate of places?"

"Not quite; she has two faithful negro servants, an old married pair, whom she calls Neptune and Amphitrite. And then, those dogs! Either of those beasts could spring at a strong man's throat and drag him to the earth!"

"And what is that about the smuggling?"

"Why, my little Barbara takes after her salt-water progenitors, who, with charity be it said, were all free-traders, except those who were pirates!"

"Ugh! and this young creature resembles them!" said Madame, in holy horror.

"I cannot say that she does in the matter of their piratical propensities;—but as for their buccaniering proclivities,—I tell you this young thing has such a keen relish for free-booting, that a smuggled aloe would seem sweeter to her taste than the sweetest orange that had paid duty! The little villain! she whispered me just now, that she had a hundred cannisters of West India sweet-meats, that were not one of them flavored with custom house! The little scamp! how she loves the sea besides! Just to see her black eyes kindle when she speaks of a ship! If she were a boy, she would run away and go to sea; being a girl, with her propensities and in her circumstances I don't know what will become of her! Hush! don't reply, here she is."

Barbara came out, bringing two chairs, which she placed for her visitors. Then, while they seated themselves, she ran away again, and returned, bringing a little table, which she sat before them, and covered with a white cloth. And then, in two or three successive flittings into the house, she brought out the whitest bread and freshest butter, the clearest guava jelly, and the most fragrant pineapple preserves; and lastly, a bottle of wine, that Monsieur Henri lifted up and gazed upon in consternation, exclaiming, when he had somewhat recovered his suspended breath—

"Why, you little audacious! don't you know, then, that this wine is never, *never* exported; that it is tantamount to high treason, even if it be not high sacrilege, to send it out of Italy! Why this is the Pope's own particular drink! How dared you? Where did you get it from? You perceive that I am asking you questions, Mademoiselle!"

The girl laughed merrily, exclaiming—

"Try it, Monsieur! try it! Try it, Madame."

"Not until you have told me where you got it! You perceive that I have no politeness; I persist in my questions, Mademoiselle."

"My father brought it from the Levant, when he came home from his last voyage, Monsieur," said Barbara, laughing.

"And of course every custom-house officer between there and here has drawn the cork, and inhaled the perfume?"

"*Oh, of course!* and tasted the contents and smacked his lips over it—*of course they have!*" exclaimed Barbara, laughing gaily, and clapping her hands in glee.

The luxurious little luncheon was discussed, and by the time they had finished, Louis brought the carriage around.

Monsieur Henri handed his sister-in-law into the back seat, and placed himself beside her. Louis took the front seat, gathered up the reins, and prepared to drive on. Monsieur and Madame then took leave of their young hostess. And the carriage started.

The road to Eastville lay through a thick pine woods, and the ride would have been a very pleasant one but for Madame's anxious thoughts, that kept her silent, and threw a little gloom over the whole party.

We know what Madame L'Orient's intentions were in coming to the main land this day; namely, to obtain a writ of lunacy against her kind-hearted old host, and a power of guardianship over his person and property. But was ever a woman so unfortunate as herself? she asked. For no sooner had she brought this old man away from the island than his insanity seemed to have dropped from him, as a garment, and he spoke and acted as rationally as any one,—with no air a-la-Grand-Monarque, no talk of crowns and sceptres, thrones and kingdoms; but with the gay and genial manners of an old French "good fellow." What was the meaning of it? Was that delightsome island, an enchanted spot, that infected its owner with the proud madness of an imaginary monarchy? And was he at once, on quitting its shores, delivered from the spell. It really seemed so.

On emerging from the pine woods, after an hour's drive, they arrived at the little hamlet of Eastville, then a small cluster of houses, built around the court-house on the cross roads.

They drove first to the village stores, that Madame might do her ostensible errand of shopping.

And when this was over, and the little packages of linen, muslin, thread and needles, made up and put into the carriage, Madame and Monsieur re-entered, took their seats and drove to the court-house, where the court was in session and the judiciary officers all at their posts. Monsieur De L'Ile's business there was simply to pay his taxes.

Madame watched in vain for an opportunity of denouncing him as a lunatic. There was none afforded. His conversation upon all subjects—property, agriculture, manufactures, commerce, politics—with the various persons with whom he happened to fall in company, was so strong, so clear, so pointed and conclusive,—evincing an intellect so profound, powerful and almost prophetic, that to have hinted at the possibility of his being a lunatic, would have been to expose herself to the certainty of being pronounced a maniac or an impostor. In a word, Madame felt herself constrained to defer her purpose to some more favorable opportunity.

Monsieur Henri concluded his business, and they turned their horses' heads shoreward.

It was near sunset when they reached the headland and Barbara Brande's old ruined house.

Barbara had tea ready for them. The table was set out under a great elm tree, and covered with imported, if not smuggled luxuries, such as guava jellies, anchovie paste, potted meats, etc., which Barbara exultingly declared, had never been spiced with duty.

After tea they took leave of their bright, young hostess, and returned on board their barque. They sailed homeward by moonlight and arrived at early bed time.

After this, Madame made many similar attempts to convict her benefactor of mania; but always without success; for though as long as Monsieur Henri De L'Ile confined himself to the island, he was for six days of the week a king, and on the seventh a pope, yet just so soon as he left its shores or received any one from the outside world upon its soil, he became a plain, cheerful, clear-headed country gentleman, whom it would have been madness to charge with lunacy. But whether on the isle or off it, whether king or countryman, Monsieur Henri ever remained the same great, generous, warm-hearted host, friend and master, dispensing happiness to all who lived on his lovely isle, beneath his benignant rule.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ISLAND PRINCESS.

"Within the island's calm retreat
She lived a sort of fairy life." MILNES.

"She was a form of life and light
That seen, became a part of sight;
And rose where'er I turned my eye
The Morning Star of memory." BYRON.

And so, as the sunny summers slipped away, in this atmosphere of love and beauty, Etoile, the peerless little "Princess of the Isle," budded from infancy into childhood. She was as lovely as the loveliest vision that ever visited a poet in his most inspired dreams. The inside of a sea shell was not more pearly white, or flushed with a more delicate rose tint, than her fair, transparent complexion; the yellow silk of the young corn no more golden bright than her shining ringlets; nor the modest violet of a deeper, purer blue than her heavenly eyes. Yet blonde, as she was, her fair face was a "softened image" of a *dark ladye* whom we have seen before. It was as if a dainty miniature had been copied in water colors from a fine portrait in India ink. The fair and roseate face of Etoile was, in fact, a delicate transcript of the beautiful dark face of her mother, Estelle.

The life of this lovely child on the delightful Island passed like a heavenly dream. It was even brighter with enchanting illusions than the usual life of childhood. She was taught to believe that the stately and benignant old gentleman, her grand-uncle, was indeed a king; that she herself was in reality a princess, and that the Sunrise Island was her hereditary kingdom. "Within the Island's calm retreat she lived a sort of charmed life," never leaving her beautiful home, never even desiring to leave it. In the pleasant mansion her education was conducted by Monsieur Henri, who instructed her in what are called the solid branches of education, and by Madame, who gave her lessons in music, dancing, and embroidery. Out of the mansion, by Monsieur Henri's express commands, she was left to herself and to nature. Here she lived at liberty in a paradise, the influence of whose beneficent beauty must forever have saved her graceful wildness from breaking into unseemly rudeness. Here she played and frolicked with the innocent freedom of the squirrel, or the bird—going up into the tops of the beautiful grove trees if their umbrageous branches wooed her presence—and learning to climb as the kitten learns; or in her own retired haunts, bathing in the blue waters of the sea until her limbs grew familiar with the waves, and she learned to breast them, as the young swan learns to swim. Thus her physical organization was in the fairest way of a full and beautiful development.

And if this star-bright Etoile was taught to believe herself a princess, she was the no less instructed to consider her position a high and holy trust for the welfare and happiness of those soon to be dependent on her. Nor were these instructions so very far from the truth as at first view they might appear. For if this lovely girl were not indeed the princess she was certainly the *heiress*, and would be the *absolute mistress* of the Island and of the people upon it, over whom she would possess more than a queen's power, and for whom she would also feel more than a queen's responsibility. And so the young creature felt it. No selfish, thoughtless, childish exactions, ever embittered the unvarying sweetness of her manners to "those who labored in her fields, or waited in her halls." No harsh tone ever jarred the harmony of her voice in speaking to them. No dark frown ever clouded the brightness of her face in looking upon them. And just as surely nothing but smiles and blessings and devoted service were hers, from those affectionate creatures.

Madame was anxious to disabuse the growing girl of her royal imaginations; but Monsieur was resolved to preserve her proud and beautiful illusions. And the only occasion upon which Monsieur was ever known to give way to furious passion, was one morning when he happened to overhear Madame inform Etoile—that so far from being a princess, she was only a miserable little beggar, dependent upon the bounty and caprices of her grandfather, who far from being a king was only a wretched old lunatic!

Upon hearing this, Monsieur Henri burst like a storm into the room, and striking his heavy cane upon the floor, roared forth in a voice of thunder—

"WOMAN!!—I have borne much from your ingratitude and deception! But dare again to doubt the royal descent of your princess, and you shall pay for your treason with your HEAD!!"

There was an awful pause.

"MADAME! do you hear?" thundered the old infuriate.

Madame *did* hear, and turned whiter than the handkerchief that she pressed to her bloodless lips, while her eyes dilated with terror until a white circle flared around their black balls! But she was past the power of speech, and could only gaze panic-stricken after the old man, as he haughtily strode from the room.

"Oh-h-h! Mon Dieu, what a situation!" exclaimed Madame, when she had recovered her breath—"the old beast! the old madman! the horrible old ogre! Bon Dieu! what bewitched me to come here and put myself in his power! Grand Dieu! and I am out of the reach of human help! Ou Ciel! if he should take it into his crazy brain that I am plotting, he would—off with my head in the twinkling of an eye! Don't I know he would? And this yellow demon of a Louis, who never gainsays him, whether he claims to be king or pope, would do it for him! Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! what is to become of a poor woman, whom her evil fate has committed to the care of a furious madman!"

And half crazy with fear, Madame seized the bell-rope, and rang a peal that presently brought Louis hurrying to the room.

"Did you ring, Madame?"

"Yes! I should think I did. It is you I want! you! Come here! Tell me now—supposing that old madman were to take it into his precious head to order an execution, what would you do?"

"Madame, pardon, I do not comprehend. I know no madman."

"Diable! Suppose, then, that my brother-in-law, your master, his majesty, the King of the Isles, were to order you to cut off the head of a fellow-servant! what should you do?"

"I should obey him, Madame."

"You would? Well, suppose he were to command you to decapitate a member of his own family?"

"I should do it, Madame."

"Then you would deserve to be hanged!" cried the lady, breaking out into a cold sweat.

Louis bowed respectfully.

"And—supposing it were even my own head?" she gasped.

"I should have to take it off, honored Madame."

"Mon Dieu, I shall go crazy! Begone!"

Louis bowed deeply and retired.

Madame sank back in her chair, pressing her handkerchief to her panic stricken and ghastly face.

And from that day forth, Madame L'Orient never felt her life, for an instant, secure from the caprices of a madman. She ceased entirely to plot "against the peace and dignity of the king," and only thought of the best means of securing her personal safety until she could make her escape from the Isle.

She wished above all things to return to Paris, where she hoped that her "misfortunes" as she called her *sins*, were by this time forgotten. But to go to Paris and reside there comfortably, required much money, and though Monsieur Henri was the soul of generosity, she doubted in this instance whether he would think proper to advance what she would consider sufficient funds. However, she broke the matter to him, and found Monsieur Henri very willing to aid her with money to the full extent of her desires. But when she mentioned her wish to take her grand child Etoile to Paris, Monsieur Henri struck his cane upon the ground, which was his form of taking an oath, and swore that the "princess" should never depart from the Island, but should remain to have her education completed at his court. At length, terrified and worn out, Madame consented to leave the little girl behind.

A very favorable opportunity offered for her voyage. Captain Brande in his fine new clipper, the "Mercury," was lying off the Headland, shipping a cargo of tobacco preparatory to setting sail for Havre. A passage was engaged for Madame L'Orient.

And accordingly on a fine day in June, Madame bade adieu to her little grand daughter, and gallantly attended by Monsieur Henri, went on board the pretty Sylph, and sailed for the Mercury lying off the Headland. A three hours' run before the wind carried them alongside the clipper, where they learned that owing to a delay in the shipment of a portion of the lading she would not weigh anchor until the next tide. There was nothing for Monsieur Henri to do then, but to take Madame to the house of Barbara Brande to wait a few hours for the sailing of the clipper.

The old house on the Headland was more ruinous and more clumsily mended than ever.

The black-haired, bright-eyed, bare-footed boys had grown into fine lads.

And Barbara had ripened into a buxom brunette, with a finely developed form, hair like the purple-black sheen of the falcon's wing, and eyes like his glance when flying towards his prey! A splendid creature was this wild sea-coast maiden! and Madame who appreciated beauty in the physique, gazed upon her in unqualified admiration as she stood upon the bluff to welcome them.

"Walk up, Monsieur! walk up Madame! I am so happy to see you!" she said, smiling and clapping her hands with all her former childish glee. "Walk up!"

"Yes! it is all very well for you to keep on repeating—'Walk up' and 'walk up,' when one had as well attempt to 'walk up' the side of a perpendicular wall!" said the old man, ruefully; and with his right hand he planted his cane as a sort of grappling hook and with his left arm dragged the weight of Madame up the toilsome, steep ascent.

"Give *me* your hand, Madame," said Barbara, laughingly stooping and extending hers to the lady, who seized it and nearly pulled her good-humored assistant down, before gaining the top of the ascent. But Barbara possessed a firm foot and a strong hand, and safely hoisted her charge.

"Grand Ciel!" exclaimed Madame, panting after the performance of this feat.

They went on to the house, ascended the rickety stairs of the portico, and entered the large, cheerful hall. Four spacious rooms, two on each side, opened into this hall. This story was the only habitable part of the house. Barbara turned the latch of the first door to the left, and admitted her guests into a large but scantily furnished parlor, without carpet or curtains, with only a dozen black oak chairs, a black oak table, and an engraved portrait of Paul Jones over the mantle-piece. This was the most comfortable and best furnished room in the house. Barbara seated her guests, brought them refreshments, and excused herself, and went into the adjoining hall to resume her occupation—the packing of a last trunk for her eldest brother, John, now a fine boy of sixteen, who was going out in the Mercury to make his first voyage. While Barbara packed the trunk, the old man watched her through the open door, launching at her laughing head an occasional jest.

"Well, my pretty Barbara, so John is going to sea?"

"Going to see *what*, Monsieur?" mocked the merry maiden.

"Ah! n'importe! but tell me, pretty Barbara, is the handsome young mate going on this trip?"

This time the girl was putting forth so much strength to force an unmanageable package into the trunk, that it threw the blood to her face in torrents of crimson, and she remained silent. And Monsieur Henri did not press the question.

Monsieur and Madame stayed and dined with Barbara; and in the afternoon the old gentleman attended his sister-in-law to the Mercury, saw her comfortably ensconced in her cabin, took leave of her there, and returned to his barque. In going home, he touched at the Headland, and went on shore for a moment to ask Barbara a question alone.

"Now tell me, bright Barbara," he said, "is the handsome young mate going this trip?"

"Well, he is, Monsieur! He is inseparable from my father—he is his right-hand man, as the saying is."

"I did not see him aboard ship."

"He is on the main, hurrying up some hogsheads of tobacco that are to go on board."

"Ah! Well, when is it to be, my pretty Barbara?'

"What, Monsieur?"

"Ah! let us have no secrets between you and me, my girl!"

"Well, Monsieur, I do not mind telling you alone," said the young girl, blushing brightly, while she answered frankly—"When he returns from his present voyage, Monsieur, my father will give up the command of the Mercury to him."

"Who will then become his son-in-law."

Barbara blushed, smiled, and nodded assent.

"And your brother, John?"

"He makes his first voyage now; afterwards he will be mate to Julius."

"Will he? I thought it was John's *sister* who was to be mate to Julius?" said the old man slyly.

Barbara crimsoned, then laughed aloud, and admitted—

"I wish it could be so! I do so *long* to go to sea! my heart has gone there often."

"After Julius?"

"Before I ever saw or heard of Julius," said the girl, in slight displeasure.

"Oh! I know it! I know it, my girl! You must pardon the jests of an old man who takes a father's interest in you. Good night, my dear; good night," said Monsieur Henri, cordially shaking her hand.

"Good night, dear Monsieur Henri."

Monsieur De L'Ile turned to depart. The inquiries he had put to Barbara Brande were not the idle questions of gossip. He took, as he said, a father's interest in the fortunes of this motherless girl, and had a private plan of his own for forwarding the prosperity of herself and her betrothed. He re-entered his barque, and sailed home by starlight. And the next day, with the first tide, the Mercury weighed anchor, and set sail for Havre.

Madame, after a prosperous voyage of five weeks, arrived at Havre and traveled post to Paris. She reached that capital a few weeks previous to the arrival of her son Victoire, with whom she thus soon had the happiness of being re-united.

She accompanied him to England when he proceeded thither to claim his bride as has been shown.

And when he failed in this enterprize, she recommended him to file a petition for a hearing before the Spiritual Court of Arches, to place the affair in the hands of a competent attorney to manage during his absence, and then to embark for America, and take up his residence with his uncle the pleasant old madman, who fancied himself King of the Isles; but who would nevertheless receive his nephew with open arms. Madame also resolved to accompany her son and re-establish herself on the Island where she felt that with Victoire by her side, she should be perfectly safe.

Upon inquiring at St. Catherine's docks she found her old acquaintance Captain Brande, with his clipper the Mercury, about to sail for the Chesapeake, and gladly availed herself of the opportunity afforded to secure a passage for herself and son.

They embarked the same night, and set sail the next morning.

And from the hour of their embarkation, Monsieur Victoire's spirits had sunk, as I said, until they had reached the point of despair. A presentiment of approaching death overshadowed him. A necessity of putting in order his earthly affairs weighed upon him. And it was under the influence of this feeling that he pressed his friend Julius Luxmore to accept the guardianship of his young daughter, and executed a testament leaving her to his charge, which he placed in Mr. Luxmore's keeping.

"If I survive, Luxmore," he said, "I shall find Estelle, inform her of the existence of her child, and through that child, constrain her to my will. If I die, Luxmore, you are to take charge of Etoile, advise her mother of her existence, but make Estelle's eternal separation from Montressor the only condition of the restoration of her child."

"I promise to execute your will, and to do all else that you desire! Nevertheless, I must assure you that your talk of death is an absurdity that proves you to be a hypochondriac," said Julius Luxmore.

Victoire shook his head, and dropped into a mournful silence.

And three weeks after that conversation, the Mercury was wrecked as we have shown, and all on board were lost except Julius Luxmore, who being rescued by Lord Montressor, and carried on board the Queen Charlotte, and finding there no one who knew him, gave his name, for reasons of his own, as Julius Levering.

In the strong box that had been picked up from the wreck of the Mercury, he found the will of Victoire L'Orient, and carefully secured it.

When the Queen Charlotte had reached the port of Baltimore, and the mournful intelligence of the wreck of the Mercury went abroad to spread grief and terror over the land, it was also said that every soul on board perished, except one Mr. Levering, whom no one seemed to know, and who, in fact, had disappeared.

And oh! as the dreadful story of the loss of the Mercury, with all but one on board, spread over the land, how many homes were darkened, how many hearts made desolate. The awful intelligence, traveling slowly through cities, towns, and villages, at length reached Eastville, reached the Headland and Barbara Brande. And upon that home the news fell like a thunderbolt, smiting it to ruin! For all was gone!—ship and cargo and crew!—father, brother, and lover! All gone at a stroke! All lost, except this Mr. Levering whom no one knew, but whom Lord Montressor had risked his life to save!

CHAPTER XIV.

BARBARA BRANDE.

"Go when the hunter's hand hath wrung
From forest caves her shrieking young,
And calm the lonely lioness,
But soothe not, mock not my distress!"
BYRON.

We left the beautiful Estelle a fugitive from love over the wide world.

We left Lord Montressor anxiously seeking some clue by which to trace her course.

We bade adieu to the "Island King" and "Princess," leaving them together in their insulated kingdom.

We parted company with Julius Levering at the moment that he disappeared from the deck of the ship.

And finally we abandoned the poor, wounded, young lioness, Barbara Brande, in the hour of her utmost need, when every earthly stay and support was stricken from her at one blow.

We return first to Barbara. She was of a stronger, firmer, more resolute and courageous nature than any woman, or than most men. Yet when the blow fell—the blow that deprived her at once of father, brother, lover, living,—all in an instant, she dropped beneath it, sunk as it were smitten to the earth!

I have seen a titanic forest tree struck with lightning before my window—seen it suddenly, by a shaft from Heaven, rived, branch, and trunk, and root, from sky to earth!

So fell the thunderbolt of fate upon her! riving, rending, scathing, brain and heart and frame! and she dropped under it, prostrate.

But she was strong and could not die—she was a human soul and could not lie prostrate and immoble forever, as the thunder-stricken tree laid!

The energetic spirit soon struggled to free itself from the serpent coils of pain and death, and longed to hurl itself amid some violent, some tempestuous, terrible action, in which the sense of anguish might be lost.

She conquered the agony—she surmounted it as we do everything in this world! Yes, she surmounted it; but the world was changed, or she was!

Life never seemed the same to her again. All seemed dull, flat, spiritless. She was weary of the ceaseless round of days and nights; weary of the monotonous rising and setting of the sun; weary of the unmeaning, unsympathizing faces of men and women; disgusted with the regular recurrence of three meals a day, disgusted with all the eaters and drinkers, workers and sleepers, buyers and sellers in this tedious, insufferable world!

In such a mood of mind, many men and women have gone mad; but Barbara Brande's brain was too strong and healthy to permit her to lose her consciousness of suffering in madness.

In such a mood many have committed suicide—but Barbara Brande, untutored child of the sea as she was, and driven to despair as she had been, possessed too deep a reverence for the laws of God and for His holy gift of life, to cast that life away and rush unbidden into the awful presence of the Giver!

So she struggled bravely to free her spirit from the writhing, binding, fettering serpents of anguish and despair!

Her heart panted to lose its dreadful sense of loss in action! Oh, action! action! action! Such action as that into which despairing man hurls himself, and forgets his despair; struggling, laborious, dangerous action! Strife, battle, war!—war with circumstance, with man, with the elements!

With such irresistible impulses women have sometimes enlisted as soldiers—aye, and won laurels, too, in fields of victory; but Barbara Brande, with all her strength, and fire, and courage, and her passionate desire to stun the maddening consciousness of anguish in some stormy conflict and career—could not have done anything like this. Her maiden modesty would not have permitted her to change her woman's dress for that of man, any more than her native truthfulness would have allowed her to practice a deception in regard to her sex. And her free, wild, ungovernable spirit could no more have submitted to the control of camp discipline, than her merciful heart could have taken part in the blood-shed of the battle-field.

So, though the wounded, tortured, maddened young creature thought of this she could not enter upon such a life.

A stricken lioness, with the arrow quivering in her flesh lays, not down in patient suffering, but runs roaring, through the desert, until the shaft falls from the wound, or she drops dead!

So Barbara! she longed to propel herself headlong into some stormy, stunning strife!

Meanwhile two boy brothers of eleven and twelve looked up in her face for comfort and support,—looked up to the brave and gentle sister, who was also the only mother they had ever known.

"Oh, sister, sister! do not stare so! You frighten us to death with your eyes!" they said, as they came to her where she sat, in the dreary, half furnished old parlor, her chamber of desolation!"

They were kneeling each side of her, with their heads upon her lap. Her arms were around each boy, her face bent over them, and her wild, black hair all unbound, and streaming around them. She might have seemed a widow with her orphans. But she was even a more desolate creature—this awfully bereaved maiden with her little brothers. For a widow has generally some knowledge of life and some experience to meet its exigencies; but what does a poor, wild girl, thunder-stricken, maddened, blinded, by such overwhelming calmity, know of battling the watch with fate?

Nothing!

There she sat—her arms around the boys' heads—her face bent over them, her dark hair streaming.

"Oh, sister, don't look so! Oh, sister, speak to us!"

"Oh, my boys! my boys! what shall sister say to you! What can sister do for you! Oh! lads, the best thing we could do would be to put to sea in a leaking boat and go down with the others!—only that the Lord forbids such!" she cried, wildly clasping them to her heart.

"Oh! no, sister! don't think of such a thing as that! We don't want to die at all," said Edwy, the younger boy.

The elder, Willful, said nothing, but gazed with unspeakable love in his sister's face.

"Oh, boys! boys! your sister will turn to a pillar of salt if she stays here!"

"Well *don't* stay here, Barbara! get the insurance money and buy a vessel, and let us lade it and make a voyage to Habana," said Willful, gazing earnestly into his sister's face.

For the first time Barbara lifted her lion-like head, shaking her black hair as a mane from her breast—her great, strong eyes kindled, her nostrils quivered, as those of a steed that scents the battle afar off—she drew in a deep breath and exclaimed, in a quick, low, resolute tone—

"That's it! I have found it! You are right, Willful, my brother! Our father's craft must be ours."

"You feel better, now, sister?" said the gentle spirited Edwy, putting his arm around her neck and kissing her cheek—"you feel better?"

"Yes!—thank God."

"And you wont any more talk about putting to sea in a leaking boat?"

"No—Heaven forbid!"

From this time Barbara's spirits rallied. She looked around upon her circumstances, prospects and duties, and her facilities for meeting the future.

First what were her duties?

Her brothers looked to her for support, comfort and guidance. She had always filled a mother's position towards them. She must now also occupy a father's place.

How should she properly discharge these obligations?

Her father's last will and testament, besides endowing her with half the small property, constituted her the whole executor of that will and the guardian of her brothers.

The property consisted of the wild, unproductive farm and half-ruined house on the Headland—an unprofitable but an inalienable estate, that would just bring garden vegetables and grain enough for family use; there were three or four negroes who worked the garden, and sometimes, when the Skipper had been short of hands, worked the ship. Besides this, there was the insurance money of the ship and cargo that had also been assigned to Barbara.

Looking over, and mentally appraising her property, her peculiar temperament, talents, and circumstances, Barbara's resolution was soon formed, and carried out. She determined to go to Baltimore, purchase a clipper, and lade it, take her negro sailors and her two brothers, and sail for the West Indies, to open a trade with her father's old correspondents.

Accordingly, leaving the house and her little brothers in the care of the negroes, Barbara took passage in the first passing vessel for Baltimore, where in a few days she arrived safely.

After the usual demur and delay, she succeeded in getting the whole of the insurance money, and then she set out in search of a clipper. She was fortunate in having a choice of three, and went about the work of inspecting them with a perfectly composed and competent manner, and astonished the grizzled old skippers of the port, by pronouncing the first unseaworthy; the second, very little if any better; and by ordering certain very judicious alterations and repairs to be made upon the third, which she finally decided on purchasing.

"Who the deuce have we here? What the demon sort of a girl is this, who knows all parts of a ship as well as she does the chambers and cupboards in her mother's house, and disputes about the build and rigging of a craft with the oldest 'salt' among us? aye! and can work a ship, I have no doubt in the world, as well as the best mate we have!" said one grey old sea-captain to another.

"Well! she *is* an 'old salt,'" replied the other, "as *old* a *salt* as so *young* a *girl* can be! That is old Brande's daughter, he who was lost on the Mercury. I suppose she is about twenty-one or twenty-two years of age, and Brande used to take her to sea with him from the time she was five years old! So Barbara may have seen fifteen years of sea-service, for ought I know."

"But what is she going to do with the clipper she has purchased?"

"Ah! Lord knows! Give one of her brothers the command of it, I suppose, if she has one grown up and capable of taking it."

While the old skippers took "the bearings" of her course, Barbara, quite undisturbed by the opinions and comments of others, completed her purchase, and left the wharf.

The same week, Barbara returned home to place affairs in order there before going to sea. She arranged the old house, and left it, together with the garden and the stock, in care of old Neptune and his wife, with whom also she left a small sum of money for their incidental expenses.

Having made all preparations, accompanied by her two brothers and attended by her negro sailors, young Neptune and Ignatius, two stalwart sons of the old couple left in care of the house, Barbara embarked in an up-bay packet for Baltimore.

Very profound was the astonishment of her old acquaintances, the skippers, when they discovered that Barbara herself would take command of her own vessel. Their surprise would have been greater still, perhaps, if they had known how thoroughly competent in all respects was this eagle-eyed, lion-hearted maiden for the task!

She was fitted for the position by nature, constitution and disposition, for she was a girl of great personal strength, courage and activity, with a profound passionate attraction towards a sea life.

She was prepared for it by education and habit; for in the dozen voyages she had made with her father, the old skipper had thoroughly instructed her in the theory and practice of the science of navigation, and the art of seamanship.

Finally, she was compelled to it by circumstances. She had not only to support her young brothers but to put them in a way of supporting themselves. Their hereditary attractions, like her own, were to the sea; and no life offered such facilities to her and to them, as the life of the merchant-service. Last and not least, her negro sailors, like their mistress and her brothers, loved the ocean, and knew how to do nothing else so well as to work a ship.

Thus being fitted for a sea life by nature; being prepared for it by education; and driven to it by circumstances, we cannot do better reader, can we? than permit her to be a sea-captain, if she wishes it—especially as our most vehement objections would be unavailing to stop her.

While superintending the lading of her vessel, she, with her brothers, boarded at a comparatively quiet house near the wharf. While at this house, one day she picked up from a parlor table a newspaper, and listlessly ran her eyes down the uninteresting sahara of its advertising columns, when her glance was arrested by the following "want:"

WANTED—TO PURCHASE OR LEASE FOR A TERM of years a moderate sized country seat in a secluded situation. A sea-coast location preferred. Address box 333, P. O., stating terms, etc.

Does the reader happen to know how many fates daily, hourly, turn upon the mere chance seeing and answering of newspaper advertisements?

Now, no sooner had Barbara Brande read this "want" than a possibility presented itself to her active mind such as had never occurred to her previously.

"A country house, in a secluded situation; a sea-coast location preferred." Why our old house on the Headland is the very place this advertiser wants—if it were only in repair! But perhaps this person, if he has capital to spare, would take it and put it in repair—for I shouldn't wonder, being the precise sort of house he wants, that he would be able to find just such another. Just precisely such houses to let, are not as plenty as muscle-shells. And if he will take it and repair it, and deduct the price of the repairs from the rent, why should I not lease it to him, rather than let the old place lie idle until it falls to pieces? As for me and my boys—our home henceforth will be the ship! Why, therefore, should I not get the rents for this old house, so as to lay an anchor to windward for the boys? It is true that there is poor old Nep aud his wife who need a home. But it will be easy to make a proviso in the lease securing them the use of the cabin they now occupy, and the little garden spot of ground around it," ruminated Barbara.

"I'll do it, if I can." She shortly determined; and sitting down, penned a note, folded and directed it to Box 333 P. O. Then calling her brother Willful, she despatched him with it to its destination.

The next morning she received an answer, written in a bold, business-like hand, requesting her to present herself at private parlor number 3, house number 10 Blank-street, and signed *S. Copsewood.*

"This looks as if Mr. Copsewood wanted to take the house," said Barbara, who lost no time in obeying the summons.

When she reached number 10, which she found to be an elegant private boarding-house, she inquired for room number 3, and was at once shown up into a superbly furnished private parlor, at the door of which she was received by a rosy-cheeked waiting maid who civilly inquired her name and business, and having ascertained that she was the person whom they were expecting, ushered her immediately into the presence of the loveliest lady Barbara thought she had ever seen.

This beautiful, dark woman was clothed in deep mourning, which, however, could not disguise the exquisite proportions of her graceful form. Her complexion of the purest, palest olive, was contrasted with jet black, slender-arched eyebrows, long drooping, black eyelashes, that effectually veiled the large languishing dark eyes, and a rich redundance of silken black ringlets that overshadowed the whole face, and lent even a deeper tone to the deep melancholy of its expression.

Barbara Brande was spell-bound, fascinated, not more by the perfect beauty, than by the profound sorrow, impressed upon this most lovely countenance.

"This is a most beautiful *shadow*," thought Barbara; "but where in the world have I seen a ray of *sunshine* answering, feature by feature, to this exquisite shadow? Where have I seen it? My acquaintance is not so extensive but that I might soon recollect. Let me see! My conscience, yes! I recollect! It is my Star of the Sea! my Island Princess! My golden-haired Etoile! She it is who is the *morning* to this dark lady's *midnight*, the *sunshine* to her *shadow*."

While these thoughts passed rapidly through the mind of Barbara Brande, the rosy maid-servant presented her to the lady, saying—

"Here, Madam, is the young woman who has come about leasing the house."

The lady lifted her languid lashes and said, interrogatively,—

"Miss Brande?"

"Yes, Madam," said Barbara, thinking that she had never heard such liquid music break from human lips before.

"Pray be seated, Miss Brande. Susan, draw that arm-chair forward."

Susan obeyed, and Barbara accepted the offered seat.

"I received a note this morning from Mr. S. Copsewood, appointing me to call here at this hour to open possible negotiations respecting a house I have to lease. I happen to have a drawing of the house executed by my brother Willful, if Mr. Copsewood would like to see it," said Barbara.

The lady looked at the speaker with serious attention and some perplexity, while Susan smiled merrily, displaying all her white teeth.

At last the lady said—

"You are under an error, Miss Brande. The note received by you was written by my attendant, Susan Copsewood. And I am the person who desires to lease a house."

"You, Madam?"

"Myself—Mrs. Estel," said the lady, placing the accent on the first syllable of her name. "You may show me the drawing, if you please, Miss Brande."

Barbara produced the drawing, and put it in the hands of Mrs. Estel.

"Will you please to describe the place to me, while I look at the sketch, Miss Brande?" said the lady.

Barbara complied, describing the situation of the house and the scenery of the Headland.

"From the picture and your description I think the place will suit me. You say, however, that the house is much out of repair?"

"Very much, indeed, Madam; it would take five weeks in time and labor, and five hundred dollars in money, to make it comfortable," replied Barbara, in whose rustic estimation this sum seemed a very large amount. "But I am willing, Madam, to give up the rent as long as necessary for the repairs of the house. And I think, also, that the house could be made ready for you sooner than you could find another to suit you so well."

"I think that is very likely. You have full powers to transfer the property?"

"I am twenty-two years old, Madam, and I am the sole executor of my father's will, and the sole guardian of my brothers."

The lady, on hearing this, now, for the first time, raised her eyes, and looked full in the face of the strange girl.

A tall, magnificently developed form, with no superfluous flesh to impede activity—a strong, handsome face, with flashing black eyes and bands of jet black hair, and an expression of pain, suffered and conquered, lingering around it,—a dress and cape of grey serge, a bonnet of coarse straw, was the *tout ensemble* that met the lady's gaze.

"How is this Headland to be reached?" was the next question asked.

"By means of the packet vessels trading along the coast of the Bay, Madam," answered Barbara.

"Very well. I will take a few days to reflect upon your proposition, Miss Brande, and let you know the result."

"I thank you, Madam. It is proper to inform you, however, that in a week hence I sail for the West Indies."

The lady here again lifts her lashes with a look of inquiry, to which Barbara replied—

"I have command of the 'Stormy Petrel,' Madam, and shall set sail for Habana in six days."

The lady looked in gentle amazement upon the girl.

"Excuse me," she said—"but could I possibly have understood you to say that *you* had command of a vessel?"

"Yes, Madam, you understand aright."

The lady was too high bred to suffer any exclamation of surprise or wonder to escape her; but she looked at Barbara with such deep interest that the girl hastened to say—

"You are doubtless surprised, Madam; but you would be less so, were you acquainted with the circumstances. I am a strong girl; I was brought up to the sea, and taught navigation and seamanship by my father, with whom I made many voyages. When he was lost in his own ship, the hapless Mercury, Madam, I was under the necessity of looking about for a support for my young brothers. None offered so readily as my father's calling—that of a merchantman. I understood no business so well as that. My negroes were all sailors. My little brothers were old enough to serve apprenticeship to the same business. Therefore I am what I am, Madam."

"Mrs. Estel had been regarding her with the deepest interest; when she ceased speaking, the lady said—

"Miss Brande, I think I may safely promise to give you, to-morrow, your answer respecting the lease of the house. I think also that there is no doubt but that I shall take it."

"Then you have no further commands for me, Madam?"

"I thank you—no."

Barbara Brande arose, bowed, and withdrew towards the door, followed by the rosy maid. With her hand upon the knob, however, she paused—looked back and said—

"Pardon me, Madam, but there is a condition I should mention before this matter goes any further."

"Proceed, Miss Brande."

"It may be a mere trifle to yourself, my lady; but a very important matter to me and *them.* In a word, I have two tried and faithful old family servants, born on the estate, brought up there, and now in their old age, living in a small cabin with a garden which they cultivate; and I should wish——"

"I understand you, Miss Brande," gently interrupted Mrs. Estel—"In the event of my taking the lease the old people shall not be disturbed. Is there anything else, Miss Brande?"

"I thank you—no, Madam. The terms suit you, I think?"

"The terms suit me."

"Then there is nothing else. Good day, Madam."

"Good day, Miss Brande."

Barbara now left the room attended by the maid.

When Susan returned she closed the door, and approaching her mistress, said, earnestly and respectfully—

"Will your ladyship go down to that bleak, lonely place?"

"Oh, yes, Susan! Yes, Susan! I never could like the town even in happiness; and now, now it suffocates me! we, with oppressed bosoms, need more room to breathe. I long for the boundless woods, and the measureless sea! that is the reason why I prefer a wild, uncultivated coast." Susan approached her mistress, and sitting down on the carpet by her side, half kneeling, half reclining, gazed upon her face with an expression of mute, appealing affection.

Mrs. Estel laid her hand benignantly upon the head of the faithful girl, and said—

"Besides, Susan, I am imprisoned here; you know I have not left this room, or seen a soul but yourself, since we came here. I dare not go out, lest in a seaport town like this I should be recognized."

"Does your ladyship suspect then——?"

"What, Susan?"

"*That he is here.*"

"My heart! my heart! whom do you mean?"

"Lord Montressor."

"No! no, Susan! Do not tell me that! He has not followed me here!" said the lady, whose pale, olive cheek seemed turning to marble.

"Susan, speak! say you were mistaken—you might have been mistaken!"

"Dear lady, are you so distressed that his lordship should prove the strength of his——"

"Girl! girl! be careful of your words."

"I will, Madam,—the strength of his *esteem* and *respect* for you?"

"To what end should he prove it? Does it need proof? Oh! why should he follow me here, only to renew a struggle so bitter, so terrible, so agonizing!" thought the lady to herself, as she sat twisting and wringing her white fingers.

"Dear lady, take comfort. Consider that his lordship, indeed, has the law on his side. Pardon me, sweet mistress, for reminding you, that for all that has come and gone, you are his wife, and he has at least a right to the hearing, that you have never given him; a right, in a word, to plead his cause with you, and——"

The hand of the lady sank softly but firmly upon the head of the recumbent girl, and with her face, that was pale before, now dark with the swelling up of a suffocating emotion, she whispered huskily—

"Susan, forbear—you know not what you say—he must be free and honored—he has a brilliant career before him—he must cut me off—I fly that he may do so—I would *die* to rid him of me!"

Susan looked up appalled at her lady's face, in its dark and terrible agony.

"Susan! never, while you live, renew this counsel. But, tell me now, are you *sure* you saw him?"

"Yes, perfectly sure, Madame."

"Where?"

"In St. John's church, yesterday afternoon."

"He did not see you?"

"No, Madam; I sat far back, in a dark corner. I wore a veil also; and you know that when a thick veil is down before our faces, close to our eyes, we can see through it even at a distance, while those far off cannot recognize our features. If it had not been for my dark corner and my veil, I think his lordship might have discovered me, for he was looking about a great deal."

"Was he looking well?"

"Oh! my lady, pardon me, how could he be looking well?"

The lady groaned, and covered her face with her hands. The attendant continued—

"No, my lady, he was not looking well! He was very thin and pale, worn and haggard, with a restlessness and anxiety on his countenance and in his manners, that it half broke my heart to behold. Oh, dearest lady, how can you bear to——"

"SUSAN!" The word escaped like a sharp cry.

"Forgive me, lady, my feelings betray me into indiscretion, sometimes."

"I am fearful, indeed, my girl, that you are not safe," said Mrs. Estel, gravely.

After this there was a pause for some moments, and then Mrs. Estel said—

"Was that the only occasion upon which you saw him here, Susan?"

"Yes, Madam; but I knew before that he was here."

"You knew it before, Susan, and never warned me!"

"You would not permit me to tell you of the shipwreck, lady."

"No, no! I cannot bear to hear of the shipwreck. There are wrecks of the heart and soul, God knows, that none upon the ocean equals! And—but we were speaking of *him*; and I do not see what the shipwreck you talk of has to do with him, since, thank Heaven, he was not wrecked."

"It has everything to do with him, dear lady! You have confined yourself to this room ever since you arrived in the city, never once going out—never seeing any one here—never looking at a newspaper—never hearing any news, and not even permitting me to speak to you of a subject that is the universal talk of the city, yet of which you know nothing. And yet, dear lady, it has something to do with Lord Montressor, since his heroism upon that occasion is the subject of universal applause."

"Applause! truly, applause would seem the natural attendant of Lord Montressor's movements; but I wait to hear what special act of his lordship called forth the applause upon this occasion."

"To explain it, my lady, I should be obliged to speak in detail of that fatal shipwreck, of which you have refused to hear."

"Proceed, Susan, proceed and have done with it, my girl; for I perceive that neither you nor I will have any peace until I have consented to listen to all the horrors you long to relate to me. Only be brief, then, and spare yourself and me as much as possible," said the lady, and resting her elbow on the arm of the chair, and leaning her forehead upon the palm of her hand, she composed herself into a listening mood.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE BRIDE.

BY TAMAR ANNE KERMODE.

She kneels before the altar,
To pledge a solemn vow;
Softly the words are spoken,
No shade comes o'er her brow.
And now she slowly turns aside,
A tear drop dims her eye;
Friends gayly come to greet her,
She meets them with a sigh.

A sigh!—she does not doubt the truth
Of the dear one by her side?
Ah! no—how trustingly she meets
His glance of love and pride.
For the past perchance was that fleeting sigh—
For the past that falling tear;
For the happy home she must leave behind,
And those who made home dear.

She thinks of her father's beaming smile,
And her mother's tender care;
She feels *his* hand in her glossy curls,
Hears *her* low murmured prayer.
She is leaving the love that never failed
For one that must yet be tried;
'Tween the past and the future comes the cloud
That rests on that fair young Bride.

It has passed away like the mist that floats
Across April's uncertain sky;
Should sorrow be found in her future path,
May it vanish as quickly by.
May the blessings showered on that bright bowed head
Never be less than now;
May grief never silver those sunny locks,
Or furrow that noble brow.

EVENING DUTIES;

OR,

THE TWO CITY CLERKS.

A LIFE-LESSON FOR YOUNG MEN.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"Show me how a young man spends his money," said a wise and good merchant, "and I will tell you at once his future prospects."

There is much truth in this; and an incident of real life is now present in my memory which may help "point the moral" therein contained.

Oliver Hudson and Albert Ryder were of the same age; both were reared in the same town; they had equal advantages in all social and moral points; and the most acute observer of human nature could not have told which had the best mind. They were as near alike as two youths could be; and even their parents occupied social and pecuniary positions of the same degree. They were good, honest boys, and generally respected and beloved.

At the age of fifteen, these two boys came to the great city. Their parents had obtained good places for them, and bright hopes lighted up their paths. Oliver Hudson was placed in the store of a merchant named Elisha Rushton, and Albert Ryder took a position exactly corresponding in the store of Hugh Buxton. Both the merchants were wealthy; both honorable men; and both engaged in the same kind of business.

A year passed away, and at the end of that time the two boys had become pretty thoroughly acquainted with city life and city manners; and both had formed a habit of spending their evenings either in the streets, or at some place of amusement. Their companions did so, and they followed the example.

One evening, they were both present at a party given by a friend, and they both partook rather freely of wine. On the following morning, Oliver Hudson awoke with a severe head-ache, and with a wo-begone feeling pervading his whole frame. It was his first debauch. He had frequently taken a glass of wine before, and thought it no harm; though he knew that his mother would be very unhappy were she to know it.

On the present occasion, Oliver felt badly. The idea that he had committed a heinous crime was not with him; but he knew that he had done wrong. It was the first touch of the barbed point to his soul. Innocent in intent, the result of his sin was heavy upon him. Could he have continued on in the same course, the next morning's sorrow would not have been so deep—the next lighter still—until, by and by, familiarity with the feeling would have blunted it to the soul, and it could be laughed off over a glass of "plain soda."

But this was the first fall, and the youth was startled. The events of the previous night were dim and indistinct in his memory after ten o'clock. He had been intoxicated! He had been in social companionship with those who were not good men. He bowed his head and thought of his mother.

Angelic presence! God surely sent thee in this all-important hour!

There came a tap upon his door, and the servant handed in a letter. It was from his mother! It contained twenty dollars in bank-notes, with her good counsel and love. She wrote him all the news, and finally closed her letter thus:

> "And now, my own dear boy, suffer me to speak with you once more as of old. Do not think for one moment that I have any fears. O, no. Were there no other inducements to lead you in the right path, I know your love for your mother would guide you aright. And yet I cannot help praying for you continually. Every night I am upon my knees asking God to bless and guide you. When you hear the clock strike nine in the evening, you may feel that you can join your prayers with mine, for then am I praying for my first-born—my well beloved son. Remember your mother, and you cannot go astray. Oh! you will not allow another to usurp my place in your confidence. You will not forget the promise you gave me when you were pure and virtuous. That promise, well kept, must ever keep you as you were then.
>
> "I send you a small sum of money, because I know your pay is not sufficient to supply you with many superfluities. This will purchase books, so that your evenings may be profitably spent. I know that my son will make a good use of his mother's token of undying love. Be sure that your books are of a true, manly character; and combine sound intellect with pleasure in your matter for reading. I know that in the daytime your business keeps your mind occupied. It is that your *evenings* may be morally and profitably spent that your mother most earnestly prays."

The angel came at the rignt moment. Oliver read these two paragraphs over a second time, and then fell to weeping. He knew that he was to his mother as the apple of her eye—as the very joy-fount of her soul. Had he done as he promised her he would do? Had he done as his own good sense told him he should have done? No. He knew that beyond the bound of right, the single step is wrong. He folded the letter carefully up and put it away, and then pressed his hands upon his brow. He stood so a few moments, and finally he turned his eyes homeward.

"MOTHER," he said, in a deep, heart-sent tone, "*I will betray thy confidence never again!*"

Albert Ryder awoke on that same morning with a head-ache, too. But, alas! he had an evil adviser with him.

"One glass of brandy, Al., and you'll be all right!"

So Albert took the glass of brandy, and under its stimulating influence he felt physically better.

On the next evening Albert came around to Rushton's store and asked Oliver to go to the theatre with him. But Oliver said he had an engagement he could not break.

And so, evening after evening, Albert came after his friend—now for the theatre—now for a stroll up Broadway—now for a whist-party—or, mayhap, for a game of billiards,—and always it was the same answer. "I am engaged."

"Look ye, Oliver," cried Albert, as he came one evening for his friend to go and see a new circus company, "what do you mean? What are all these engagements? Aint there a female in the question?"

"Yes, Albert,—I must acknowledge that there is."

"Aha—I've found you, have I? A female, eh? Oh, Oliver, I didn't think that of you. But who is she? Come—out with it: Who is she?"

"*My Mother*, Albert!"

"Eh? your mother?" repeated the giddy youth, with a sudden softness of tone. "I didn't know she was in the city."

"Nor is she, Al. But her noble, prayerful love is with me; and my sacred promise is with her!"

"But you used to go with us, Ol.; you were not thus a month ago."

"Because I did not realize how surely I was falling away from my promise," replied Oliver, promptly. "You remember the last evening we spent together. On the next morning I had a headache."

"So did I, Ol.; but I soon got over it."

"And so did I get over mine—and over my heart-ache, too. I saw then, Albert, that I was not safe while spending my evenings abroad. I saw how I was departing from the precepts of one who lives only for the good of her children. No, Albert—I cannot go with you any more. I have looked at the matter in all its bearings, and I know there is no safety for us in spending our evenings abroad. The influences are all bad. In this great city the good and pure influences of life are confined to the home circle, and certain social assemblies of good people. They are not found in the streets, and much less are they found in those saloons which we have sometimes visited. No. Let us break from them. Come to my room. My mother has sent me money, and I have bought some valuable books. Come to my room, and we'll read them to each other. Come."

"No, no, Oliver—not now. Come you with me. Come this once."

"Ah—'*this once*' is a dangerous step, Al. One step from the edge of a precipice is death! One step from the path of Right is *Wrong!* No,—if you will come with me, we will pass our evenings together. Think, Albert, before you make up your mind. You know your mother loves you as well as my mother loves me; and she would be equally sad to know that you had fallen——

"Pshaw! Don't be a fool, Oliver! Do you suppose I have no eyes? Don't you suppose I know what is safe, and what isn't? Do you suppose I'm going to be shut up in a store all day, and then shut myself up in a house all night? No! not by a long chalk—now I tell you!"

"You misunderstand me, Albert. I don't shut myself up all night. I frequently go to lectures; and then for exercise I walk down to the Battery every morning before the store is open."

"Pooh! That's the time when I want to sleep. But you wont go with me, then?"

"No—I cannot."

"Well, then I must find somebody else. And, mind you—one of these days we'll see if you wont change your mind."

"If I find I am wrong, I most certainly shall," was Oliver's reply, as his companion turned away.

The two youths had supposed that their conversation was heard only by themselves; but they were mistaken in this. They had stood by the door of the counting room, and Mr. Rushton was within, though he had not yet lighted the gas. He had just started up for that purpose when the first request of Albert Ryder was made. A natural desire to hear what would be his young clerk's reply induced him to listen. So he had heard the whole; and he was not sorry.

Elisha Rushton was a good and true man, caring nothing for opinions which sound reason would not sustain, and ready to do all the good which lay in his power. Once he had been in the habit of trying to overlook the moral characters of his clerks, and of advising with them, and offering them assistance in the path of Right. But he had only received the title of a meddler for his first efforts, and had been imposed upon in his second. So now he had established this one rule: He would give no advice which was not asked, unless he saw a youth in immediate danger; and all his clerks knew that any extended irregularity would be the sure signal for their discharge.

For three months after the conversation took place between Oliver and Albert the former was watched by his employer very narrowly. There seemed to be a subject of more than ordinary import occupying his thoughts; for sometimes, when he could gaze unnoticed upon the handsome, happy, healthful face of Oliver, he would sit for half an hour without once removing his eyes from the object of interest.

One evening, as Oliver sat alone in his chamber, the servant-girl came and informed him that a gentleman wished to come up and see him. The youth bade her to show him up; and in a few minutes afterwards he was not a little surprised upon seeing his employer—the wealthy merchant himself—enter his room.

The common civilities were passed, and then Mr. Rushton sat down and looked around. He saw a neat, substantial book-case, well filled with good books; a few choice pictures upon historical subjects; and a table, upon which were books, paper, pens and ink, drawing materials, and a flute. The merchant glanced at the book which Oliver had just laid down, with his "mark" carefully placed where he had left off reading, and saw that it was "COOPER'S VIRGIL."

"Do you read Latin?" Mr. Rushton asked.

"Not much, sir," replied the youth, modestly. "I studied it some when at school, and I thought I might as well devote a part of my time to that as not. I find that I can get along very well by reading a little every evening."

"*Every* evening? Do you spend every evening here?"

"Almost, sir. I go to a good lecture now and then."

"Then you don't go out much evenings?"

"No, sir."

"Don't you like it?"

"Well—I should like to walk out oftener, perhaps, if there were any pleasant places in which to walk; but this city doesn't afford many such, sir."

"But most young men of your age find plenty of pleasure abroad in the evening."

"I suppose so, sir. And yet it is but a flashing pleasure, after all. I fear many of them are purchasing present pleasure at the cost of future suffering. No, sir—I find no pleasure abroad. I will not say that there is none to be found. There may be much. In fact, I know there must be much of real pleasure to be found in our great city by those who are thoroughly acquainted, and know where to look for it. I do not mean that the city is void of good, or of true pleasures. But, sir, I am——"

"Well—go on. You are what?"

"Why, sir—I do not feel safe to trust myself in the society of those who seek their pleasures away from home every evening. I may be weak, but if I am, I am willing to acknowledge it. However, I have one consolation: If I don't venture near the fire I shan't be burned."

"You are right, Oliver—very right," returned the merchant, warmly; and then he added, in a sort of business tone—

"But I must broach the subject upon which I called. How do you like your boarding-place?"

"Why, sir—I like it as well as I think I should any boarding-house," answered Oliver, in surprise.

"Would you object to changing it?" pursued Rushton.

"Of course not, sir, if you wished it."

"Well, I do wish it; and I'll tell you why: I have a very small family—only my wife and one child—and I would like to have one of my clerks always by me. Very often I want to look over accounts at home; and then I often want to send business errands to the store in the morning before I wish to go down myself. If you'll come and board with me you shall have a better room than this is, and I'll keep you for nothing; so you'll have three dollars and a half per week to buy books with; and, moreover, you shall have the free use of my library."

"I—I——"

"Speak out."

"I will do anything you wish, sir."

The merchant seemed surprised. He had supposed that the youth would have been deeply moved by the proffered attention.

"I only wish you to please yourself, Oliver," he said, a little more coolly than he had before spoken.

"I will speak plainly, sir, for I know you will not be offended," returned the youth, coloring. "My parents are not wealthy, but they are honorable and respected by all who know them. I appreciate your kindness, sir—but—I should not feel happy—I—I—should not feel at home in any house where there was a class privileged above me. You may think me foolish—but—really, sir——"

Poor Oliver broke down. He couldn't come at it as he wished. At first a look of utter astonishment settled upon the merchant's face; but gradually the light broke in upon him, and the old expression of pride came back.

"Aha—I see, I see," he cried. "You think I meant to take you into my house, and place you on a social par with my servants?"

Oliver looked surprised in turn.

"Am I right?"

"Why—yes, sir."

"And would you *thank* me for that?"

"Yes, sir; because I am confident that you would propose nothing to a dependent which was not meant for good."

"Thank you, Oliver—thank you. But I meant no such thing. I have no son—a—I meant for you to come and occupy a place in my family as an honored and respected member of that family. Now will you come?"

Oliver Hudson started up and caught his employer by the hand. He tried half-a-dozen times to speak, and finally managed to say—

"I should be very happy, sir—very—I——"

* * * * * * *

The dwelling of Elisha Rushton was one of those quiet, unassuming structures, which would seldom be noticed as the abode of wealth were it not for the extensive conservatory, the open garden, and the carriage-house. Where land is worth almost its own superficial area in silver coin, only great wealth can retain such sources of gratification. Within the merchant's house all was substantial and of real worth. The furniture was massive; the pictures of the first class; the ornaments pleasing to the eye and to sense; while the whole was made subservient to comfort.

Mrs. Rushton was a woman of sound, practical sense, having started in life as the wife of a poor clerk; and being able now to look back upon the past, and feel that at every upward step she had been by her husband's side—never lagging behind to be lifted up, nor pulling upon him to drag him back.

They had but one child—a daughter—named Emily. She was now fifteen—just a year younger than Oliver. She was what fashionable people would call "*so-so.*" She was not a beauty, because there was no particular "*style*" to her features. In frame she was full and plump; and in feature fair and rosy. Her face was a bed of roses and sweet smiles, and her laughter was inspiring. In short, she was one of those whom Love marks for its own Her appearance inspired none of that awe and distant admiration which your set beauty commands; but the first feeling upon becoming acquainted with Emily Rushton was confidence and love.

And into that society was Oliver Hudson thrown. For awhile he seemed fearful of approaching too near; but gradually this feeling wore off, and at the end of six months they were free and easy in each other's society. And this feeling had not been Oliver's alone. No, no. Emily had for a long time treated him differently from what she treated all other male acquaintances. She had been more distant and reserved, and far more respectful. But, as we just said, this all wore off, and they became happy as could be in each other's society. Oliver was a better looking youth than most of those who visited there, and then be had that in his soul and brain which supplied the material for many a happy and profitable hour.

Three years had passed away from the time of the two boys' entrance into the great city. They were now eighteen years of age.

Albert Ryder was an excellent salesman, and as he managed to stick to his business during business hours, his employers asked no questions. But Oliver Hudson saw what many others did not see, for he looked through the eye of love and solicitude. He saw that Albert's face was not so fresh and fair as it used to be; the eye was not so clear and bright; and the step was not so firm and buoyant.

"Albert," he said, as the two met one evening at the store of a mutual friend, who was on the verge of bankruptcy, and with whom the former had associated much of late, "will you let me speak a few plain words to you?"

"Pooh! What's the use? I know all you would say, Ol."

"Never mind, let me speak. Come—let us walk."

There was something so calm and sincere about Oliver's manner, and at the same time so dignified, that Albert could not refuse; so they walked out.

"Albert," commenced the other, in a deep, earnest tone, "you are going down hill!"

"*Me? Down hill?*" repeated Albert, in surprise.

"Yes—you are going down hill. You are becoming the slave of appetite—of a base and dangerous appetite!—Stop. Let me speak. I aim at your good, Albert—at your good alone. God bear me witness when I say—For your good I would suffer much! You are not safe. Ah—you can feel it now. Your eye, Albert, is not the eye you brought from beneath your mother's roof! That red and blurred expression I cannot see but with pain. Albert—my friend—my well beloved—you are standing upon the brink. You can return now in safety—a little while, and it may be too late. *You are becoming an inebriate!*"

"Stop, Oliver!" cried the young prodigal. "You wrong me now. You know better than that. Albert Ryder become a drunkard? You know better!"

"Albert—answer me truly: What makes your eye so red, and your face so pale? What makes your hand tremble, and your lip crisp and crackled? What makes you shun me so often, and refuse to listen? Tell me, for I know that you have ample proof of my love."

Albert was silent for some moments, and when he spoke his voice was low and faltering.

"If I shunned you, Oliver, it was because I didn't want to hear your lectures."

"Well, my old mate—my companion of other days," said Oliver, placing his hand upon the other's shoulder, and speaking with a trembling voice and tearful eye, "this once let me speak, and I will trouble you no more. You may after this seek those who can flatter you more fully, and speak more pleasing language to your ear. Only God grant that they may not turn your mother's chiefest hope from the path of manhood."

Albert bowed his head, and was silent; and Oliver continued, in the same touching, devoted tone,

"Albert—*give me your evenings and I will give you peace and joy!* Oh! listen to me now. Lay down a new rule. Make your evenings subservient to your real good. Spend them in your own home, over your books. Cast off the evil companions you have found, and find better ones. Seek for good and true men, and cultivate a taste for knowledge. Look at him whose store we have just left. One year ago he started in that store with a clear cash capital of thirty thousand dollars! Now—*now*—he is not worth one penny! Aye—he is worse—he is deeply, deeply in debt! *You* know what has done it."

"*Me?*"

"Yes, Albert—you. First, it was wine; then it was a stronger drink; then it was evenings abroad, searching for pleasure in saloons, and on the street corners. And, finally, *the gaming-table finished the work!* Am I not right?"

"How should I know?"

"Have you not seen him there?"

"*Me?*"

"Aye, Albert—have you not visited those fearful dens with him? Have you not lost *your* substance at the gaming-table?"

"Oliver, you've been dogging me!"

"Hush! Speak not in that tone to me, Albert. Speak not so to the only man in all this great wilderness of Humanity who has the honesty to tell you the truth, and the love to care for you for yourself! I have watched you,—aye—with an aching heart! But the secret is locked up in the bosom of your friend. Not even to my own mother would I whisper it. Beware, Albert,—beware of the precipice! You are upon its verge! Turn and be safe! If you want companionship I will introduce you into a society at once genial and pure. What say you?"

"I—I—know you mean well, Oliver; but you are entirely mistaken. I am as safe as you are. I can let drink alone at any moment!"

"Then do it while you have the power; for I do assure you that the power will soon leave you! The very glass that you leave untasted, if you please, is surely one more portion of power, if tasted, towards binding more firmly the chains of your enslavement. He who can let drink alone if he pleases, may not see that he is gradually losing that very power upon which he founds his hope of safety. Come, Albert—come with me!"

"Not now. Ah, here come some friends. They are searching for me. Good night, Oliver."

Thus speaking, the reckless youth turned away and joined a party of three like himself, and they went off after such pleasures as they were in the habit of finding—joyless, restless pleasures—withering in a night, and leaving only the dry, hard, sharp thorns, stark and piercing.

Oliver watched his misguided friend until he had passed from sight, and then, with a sad heart, he turned towards his own peaceful home.

Time sped on, and finally Oliver Hudson began to grow unhappy. He had been advanced from post to post, until he was now head book-keeper, with a salary of three thousand dollars per annum. Mr. Rushton noticed the young man's dejected manner, but for a while he said nothing. Emily noticed it, too; and she asked him why he was so sad and thoughtful. He put her off many times but at length she was determined to be put off no more. She found Oliver alone one evening in the parlor, and she went to his side and placed her arm about his neck.

"Oliver," she said, in a low, earnest tone, "tell me what it is that has affected you so. You have lost some near friend—some one whom you loved well. Come—I will sympathize with you. Trust your secret to my keeping."

"*You* sympathize?" cried the youth, starting up from his seat, and gazing almost wildly upon the lovely girl. "*You—you*——Emily Rushton! Oh! you know not my——"

He struggled a moment—the tears burst from his eyes—he caught the hand that glided down his arm, and pressed it to his lips. And then with a deep groan, he hurried from the room! Emily gazed after him in astonishment; but gradually the light broke in upon her, and with a sudden tremor she sank down upon the seat he had left.

The maiden called to mind a hundred little words and actions of the past—she reflected upon the scene which had just transpired—and then she bowed her head, and bright drops trickled down the long silken lashes and fell upon her bosom.

Her father found her thus. He wound his arm about her, and asked her why she wept.

"I have discovered Oliver's secret!" she said. "But he knows it not."

* * * * * * * *

The wealthy merchant took his young book-keeper by the hand and gazed into his face.

"Oliver," he said, with a look and tone of firm purpose, "I wish to know why you are of changed. Tell me, sir. If you have one feeling so respect for me left, I wish you to tell me."

The youth struggled with his emotions awhile, and finally he answered in a spasmodic, broken tone,—

"I will tell you, sir; but, O, you must not think I have broken faith with you. I could not help it! But henceforth I may redeem all. I can stay beneath your roof no more. I cannot remain where——"

The young man broke down here, and turned away to hide his emotions.

"Oliver Hudson," spoke the merchant, almost sternly, "I thought you knew me better. Your present course indicates but little confidence in one who has thus far been to you a true friend. Do you remember a conversation you held with Albert Ryder some three months before I took you into my family?"

Oliver started, for the memory of that meeting with his quandom companion flashed upon him at once.

"Yes, sir," he replied. "I remember it well."

"And I overheard every word you uttered on that occasion," resumed the merchant, earnestly. "I knew that one who held the principles you then advocated; who held in such deep reverence the memory and lessons of a mother; and who was determined to live up to them, must be a pure-minded, honorable, and virtuous youth. For three months thereafter I watched you narrowly; and I engaged one in whom I could confide to watch you evenings. The result was, that I found you to be all I hoped. And then came a deeper and more important plan. I had a child whose future welfare was my most anxious study. She must have companionship; and early companionship does much towards shaping human destiny. She would soon find associates in the opposite sex. I looked around, and among all her acquaintance I could not find the youth whom I could fully trust. There may have been many; but I did not put confidence in the influences which surrounded them.

"I brought you here, Oliver; and when I found how firm you were in truth; how stern in duty; and how mild and gentle in disposition, I hoped that you might live on to manhood, and that, at the proper time, I might place my child in your keeping—that she might be yours to love and honor—yours to guard and protect—yours forever! She loves you, Oliver—she has loved you a long time. She would be very unhappy if you were to go away; and, should you stay away, one of the brightest hopes of my life would be wrested from me! What say you now?"

The youth caught his employer by the hand, but he could only say—

"God bless you!"

And that was enough.

From that hour the old joy came back to Oliver's face, and he was happy as man can be. He held Emily to his bosom, and told his love; and when she smiled the happy answer, they wept together for pure joy.

And yet time passed on. Oliver Hudson became the partner of Elisha Rushton in business, and when he had seen the full bloom of manhood he led Emily to the altar, and became the husband of one of the fairest and nobest daughters of the city. His aged mother was present at the nuptials; and as she gazed upon her boy she felt that in the pride and joy of the present moment she was more than repaid for all her care and anxiety in the past.

Oliver had looked for his old friend, Albert Ryder, but he could not find him. He had left Mr. Buxton's store, and they knew not where he had gone.

Time rolled on, and Oliver became a father. One day as he was coming up from a ship, the cargo of which belonged to him, he saw a poor, bloated, ragged outcast lying under some boards on the pier. He stopped and gazed into that face. Could it be possible? Yes. It was Albert Ryder!

Oliver spoke to him, but he was senseless. Then he went back to the ship, and called up two of the men, and had them carry the senseless form to the nearest place of refuge. Here he engaged a nurse, and provided for all the poor man's wants; and left a note for Albert, in which he stated that if he would try to help himself, he should be saved.

At the end of a month, Albert Ryder took his place in Oliver's store. He was thin, pale, and weak; and his frame trembled; and but for the stern kindness, and mild promptness of his true friend, he would have fallen back. But he conquered the enemy at last. He became a man once more, though not the happy, joyous man he might have been. His youth was gone, and all its memories were sad and bitter. He was a man, indeed, but, alas! there were traces of the wreck which could not be effaced. Away in the quiet churchyard of his native village there was a grave, o'er which the tall grass of a twelvemonth waved. His mother's mouldering form lay there! Her grey hairs had been brought down in sorrow to the narrow house of clay, and the prodigal knew that he was guilty!

Oh! had it not been for that, he might have been happier. But he sought the balm of a contrite heart, and asked God to forgive him. He performed his duties well, and was a faithful clerk and salesman. He regarded his employer—his companion in youth—his savior now—with feelings of deepest reverence and love. He emulated Oliver's virtues, and strove to repay him for all his kindness; but Oliver's happiness he could not reach. That was based upon the sure foundation which he had neglected—the foundation which could not now be erected upon memories such as burdened his soul.

"Alas!" he said, as he sat one evening in Oliver's pleasant parlor, and held Oliver's eldest boy in his lap, "how few of our youths realize that one great truth of city life: As a young man spends his evenings, so shall the influence thereof remain with him through all the after years!"

BEWARE OF IT.—Flattery is like champagne, it soon gets into the head.

BEAR AND FORBEAR.

BY THE REV. HENRY EDWARDS.

Bear and forbear; this is love's wisest art;
Let both be skill'd and practised from the heart.
Both draw their loveliest ornament from hence,
Like polished armor, beauty and defence.
If you but lightly cause the slightest pain,
Farewell to love, your union grows a chain.

Should you feel hurt—forgive, forget the past,
Nor let your trifling wars a moment last.
Instead of the last word and the retort,
The first relenting and submission court.
'Tis your own fault, if now deceived too late,
Chide but yourself, who planned and chose such fate.

The worst have virtues, and the hardest lot
Is not entirely by kind Heaven forgot.
Could grateful memory the past renew,
What countless mercies would awake to view;
And smiling o'er the threat'ning clouds now past,
The sky of hope no more be overcast.

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FOREST SKETCHES---NO. 30.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY COL. WALTER P. DUNLAP.

A RIDE ON AN ELEPHANT.

"Well, boys," said our host, as we collected around him on the last evening of our stay at Caddo Lake, "I've got most through with my African jaunt. But I had one more adventure that I think is worth telling. Upon leaving the river, we took a sweep to the southward. It was a long distance out of the way, but I had business there. Upon the north-eastern confines of the great table-land, within the territory of the Shaggas Tribes, there were some very fine gold mines, and I hoped to make a good thing among the natives there.

"Towards the close of an intensely hot day, which we had spent upon the desert, we came to a broad belt of mountain forest near the Mombaza. Quite a stream ran along at the foot of the hills, and the foliage was green and rank. It was a pleasant place, and we considered ourselves fortunate in having reached it. We had some four or five hours of daylight left, but both we and our horses needed rest, and we concluded to take it.

"We had found good grazing spots for the animals, and kindled a fire for cooking some birds we had shot in the morning, and were just bringing some water from the stream, when we were startled by a loud noise from the desert. I started to my feet and seized my rifle, and rushed to the edge of the wood, where a scene was opened to my gaze that affected me in several different ways at the same time. I was awe-stricken; fearful; delighted, and amazed all in a moment. A herd of elephants came, rushing over the sandy plain, with their huge trunks thrown aloft, and loud cries issuing from their throats, while the very desert quaked beneath the shock of their tread.

"They were coming directly towards the spot where I stood; and as soon as I could collect my thoughts, I understood why they had taken that course. The place we had selected for our camp was the only opening of any consequence to be seen from the plain. As we had approached the wood, it seemed to form a solid barrier of trees upon the river's bank, save the single break wherein we had pitched our little tent. Of course, the elephants had seen, and were making for the same passage.

"Abdac and Mada were quickly by my side, and as soon as the former saw the monsters, he assured me that they had been attacked by hunters, and had broken away. Said he:

"'I know it must be so. They have been driven into a pen somewhere, and have broken out. Ha! and see!' he cried, as his keen, sharp eyes searched among the gigantic beasts, 'there is one with an arrow sticking into his shoulder.'

"I looked, and plainly saw the feathered shaft of a long arrow swinging to and fro upon the right shoulder of the leader of the herd. Abdac assured me that they were mad, and that if they saw us, and could get hold of us, they would be very sure to wreak their vengeance upon us. I merely stopped long enough to see that there were at least a dozen of the elephants, and then turned and followed my companions upon a run.

"'They won't trouble the horses,' said Mada, as I suggested the idea of letting them loose. 'It's human beings that have been afoul of them.'

"I waited to ask no more, for the huge mountains of living flesh were close upon us. At a short distance I saw a tree, up which I knew I could easily make my way.

"'Not there! not there!' cried Abdac, as he rushed past me.

"But I did not understand him; and if I had, I should have probably kept on, for I had no time to think further. The elephants were already within the opening. The tree I had selected was a sort of oak—tall and lithe—and thick with foliage. I had only looked to see that it was tall enough, and stout enough to carry me beyond reach, and to support me. As to the particular size of the tree beyond that, I had not thought.

"I had fairly gained my perch, and was upon the point of swinging my rifle over the limb upon which I sat, so as to balance myself, when the foremost elephant—he with the arrow in his shoulder—passed directly beneath me. I felt easier. If he passed, the rest would, I thought. But not quite. Directly two more passed; and then came the fourth. He reached the tree—he stopped—he uttered a loud snort—and then raised his trunk towards me. 'Aha!' thought I; 'old chap, you can't quite come it!' The fellow seemed to know what I said, for no sooner were the words out of my mouth than he threw his trunk about the body of the tree and gave a vigorous pull.

"This animal was the largest of the herd—larger I think than the foremost one. At all events, he was a monster, and I was not long in gaining an exhibition of his strength. The first pull he gave the tree swayed it considerably; but that was nothing. It seemed to be only a trial of the wood, to see how great was its power of resistance. In a moment more, he began to put forth his strength. His long trunk was wound around the body of the tree some twelve feet from the ground, and not far from eight feet below where I sat, and thus he plied his strength. The lithe tree shook and bent like a reed. At the fourth or fifth sway I dropped my rifle. I found I must either let it go or go myself. I had hoped that I might be able to put a ball into his eye; but that hope was gone.

"In less than half a minute I knew I must go. The infuriate beast shook the tree as though an earth-quake were at work upon it. My hold was growing weak—my whole body ached—my head was swimming—and my breath was leaving my body.

"At that moment, when I knew I must go, one of those thoughts came to me which often flash upon a man when death stares him in the face. If I were shaken off, I should surely fall—and if I fell, of course I could exercise no control over the direction I might take. As this thought flashed through my mind, I gathered my remaining energies and made a spring for the elephant's back, and alighted directly upon his neck, just forward of the shoulders.

"The monster took his trunk from the tree, and gave it a fling at me, but without effect. He tried it four separate times, without hitting me. Twice he struck sideways, the blows falling behind me; and twice he threw his trunk up over his head, the blow falling short. I had, by the merest accident, gained the very point which the fellow could not reach with any great force. He could reach me with the end of his enormous proboscis, but not with force enough to injure me. Or—if I am mistaken in this, as some pretend to say I must be—he must have been so blinded with passion that he could not aim straight. But I am of opinion that there is a point over the shoulders which he cannot reach with a powerful blow.

"As soon as the animal found that he failed in that, he gave a tremendous snort, and started at full speed. The rest of the elephants were out of sight. Which way they had gone I could not tell. I could see nothing of them, nor could I hear anything.

"I tell you, boys, I began to find that I had caught a Tartar. I had him fast enough, and he had me full as fast. He struck off into an open path—a sort of sandy road in the wood—where a stream of water seemed to have at some time run. He went at a furious rate, snorting and bellowing, and ever and anon tossing his head in anger.

"In a very few moments, the water of the stream flashed in the light of the descending sun. The monster made for it and dashed in. It was only a narrow river, and in a few seconds he was across. The opposite bank was low and sandy, and the edge of the wood not far from a quarter of a mile distant, there being a wide field of sand between it and the water. The monster leaped up the bank, and bounded for the wood. I now saw the tracks of his companions. They were plain enough upon the soft sand.

"At this moment my heart sank. When the elephant should gain that wood I must go. There was no help for it. The trees were thick, and I should be swept off by the branches the first thing. I strained my eyes—I followed the course of the tracks ahead of me—and I saw that there was no opening in the wood. The elephant could crash along through the dense growth by tearing aside the stout limbs, but the first one could not help casting me off like a feather before a whirlwind.

"I had no time for reflection. Like a flash came the thought of slipping from my seat; but on the instant I saw that that would only be sure death, for my bearer was surely only bent upon revenge; and from the manner in which he rushed for the wood, and from his short, vengeful snorts, I believed he was planning to dislodge me by running me against the intervening branches. I think there was no mistake about that.

"Half a minute had elapsed since the animal left the stream. A large space was already cleared. We were approaching the fatal branches at a frightful pace. In a few moments more—in a few minutes at the outside—I should be lost. It had been with the most astonishing exertions that I had managed to keep my seat; but I had done it thus far. Suddenly a hope flashed upon me. I clung more closely to my place.

"I remembered of reading about how elephant drivers in India sometimes kill their animals when they become crazy with rage. Why could not I do it? I had my knife—a stout, sharp, keen, long-bladed weapon, almost like a cutlass. I drew it, and grasped it firmly. Then I tried to calculate where was the spot beneath which lay the most vital part of the spinal cord. I pondered a moment, and my slight knowledge of the anatomy of the brute creation guided me. I placed the keen, glistening point of the knife upon the spot—just forward of the shoulders—I hesitated a moment to assure myself that I was as near right as I could judge—and then I gathered myself for the effort. All my power—all I could spare—was thrown into my arms and shoulders. I clapped both hands upon the heavy haft, and then bore down. The point penetrated the thick, swart skin—it sank—sank,—I bore down with one mighty effort, for the knife gave me a holdfast now, and the bright blade entered to the hilt!

"The huge monster stopped and gave a sharp, nasal cry of pain—he shook like a quaking mountain—and then, without even so much as an effort to the contrary, he settled upon the sand just as an ox settles beneath the blow of the butcher's axe! I watched his fall, and as he came down I leaped in safety to the ground.

"I turned and gazed upon my fallen foe. For a full minute he lay as motionless as a stone. Then his great body began to quiver—his legs were drawn up—his head was raised—the heavy trunk lashed the sand—one more raising of the head—and then the eyes closed, and the gigantic form was still and dead!

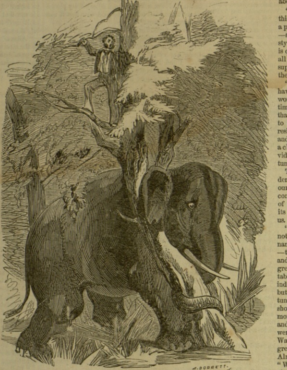
"I started back and swam the river, and met Abdac and Mada just coming from the wood to search for me. They had seen me, from their perches, ride past on my beast. They had their axes; and when I told them what I had done they proposed that we should go and get the elephant's tusks if we could. I agreed to the venture, and we went. But it was no slight task to remove the massive ivories. However, by dint of chopping and smashing into the ponderous jaws and skull, we at length succeeded in getting them. We got them over the stream by means of a rope, as we could not, of course, swim under such a burden.

"I came safely out from that adventure, and I was thankful. I felt that I had seen about enough of life in that country. I had been spared thus far, even though terrible dangers had fallen about me; but could it be so always? I felt not. And so I determined to tempt fortune no further if I could avoid it.

"I reached the gold mines in safety, and made quite a speculation there. At any rate, I gained more than enough to pay all the expenses of my trip, and leave me something for my time into the bargain. From there I went directly to Zeilak, where I took passage in a felucca for Mocha, arriving at the latter place safe and sound. Three months after that I sold my vessel to Abdac, and started for home in the old ship *Gonzales*. And the very fact that I am here to-night to tell you the story is proof enough that I reached home in safety."

And that finished Uncle Abner's story; and it was our last evening of real life in the Western Wilds. On the following morning we took leave of good old Uncle Abner, and kind, generous old Mammy, and then started for the Atlantic board. At St. Louis we parted with Garl; and as I held him by the hand for the last time, I saw a bright drop in his eye—I know there were several in my own.

Stout old Garl! He was rough and uneducated in the fashions of society; but he had a noble heart and an upright soul,—scorning a mean action—set like a rock against all wrong—and ever ready to venture even life itself for those he loved.



The rest of us came on together, and reached New York just as the first snow of winter lay upon the earth. Ben Gilroy and Ned Hobson are now in the State of Maine, the former engaged in a heavy wholesale manufacturing business; while the latter drives his own horses, and lives upon the interest of his money. Fitzeben is close by them; and if you ever chance to stop at a certain station on the Grand Trunk (or, Atlantic and St. Lawrence) Railway, not over forty miles from Portland, you may see him, dressed all in white, with a paint-pot in his hand, and dabs of white paint upon his glossy, ebon phiz. He sent me his "dog'-ertype," as he calls it, not long since,—which, by the way, turned out to be an ambrotype,—but it is old Fitzeben all over, even to the ancient and abbreviated pipe; and I would not part with it for the best oil painting I ever saw.

Harris is in Connecticut. A few weeks since, as I sat at my desk—it was a Sabbath evening, and I was engaged over the last number of the London Quarterly,—my servant announced that a gentleman would see me below. I went down, and my eyes rested upon the genial features of good, generous Harris. We shook hands; we told our mutual joy at the meeting; and anon he was within my sanctuary, and we were living over again the scenes of the past. Only one thing did he tell me which was unpleasant to hear: He is still plodding on, through a darksome, dreary life, surrounded by blushing damsels and blooming widows, of all sizes, sorts, and ages, and yet a bachelor! Shame on him! Were he ugly-looking, or very old, or poor, or maimed, I would not blame him; but he is good-looking; not over forty; with plenty of money; and stout and healthy as a moose. Heaven help him to a wife!

Last. Your humble servant is awaiting orders; open for more adventures; and willing to give them to you, Dear Readers, when he has opportunity.

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HOW TO MAKE BACHELORS MARRY.

It is matter of complaint and speculation that in all our large cities, and in fact in rural vicinities also, the young men of the land are growing more and more prone to bachelorhood, and that marriage does not keep step with the progress of the age. The chief reasons assigned for this deplorable state of things are the enormous expense of living and the increasing extravagance of women!—excuses which show to what contemptible subterfuges the adherents of a bad cause will unblushingly resort. To overcome this selfish bachelorism of the degenerate men of our time, the good old marriage laws of Sparta should be enacted by our legislatures. In that renowned Republic the time for marriage was fixed by statute—that of the men at about thirty or thirty-five years; that of the women at about twenty or a little younger. All men who continued unmarried after the appointed time were liable to a prosecution; and all old bachelors were prohibited from being present at the public exercise of the Spartan maidens, and were denied the usual respect and honors paid to the aged. "Why should I give you place," cried a young man to an unmarried general, "when you have no child to give place to me when I am old?" No marriage portions were given with any of the maidens, so that neither poverty should prevent a gallant, nor riches tempt him, to marry contrary to his inclinations. The parents of three children enjoyed considerable immunities, and those with four children paid no tax whatever—a regulation which all married men with large families will readily admit to be most wise and equitable.

Truly, the Spartan law-makers were wise in regard to matrimony; and would our legislators emulate their wisdom we should no longer have "female extravagance" and "enormous household expenses" offered as sufficient reasons for our young men's eschewing marriage and spending their time at club houses and saloons, their money in liquor and segars and their strength in tobacco juice.

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Reason.—Reason dissipates the illusions of life, but does not console us for their departure.

UNCONGENIAL MARRIAGES.

BY CLARA SYDNEY.

"*Parted!*" have they? is it possible? and what for, pray?"

"Oh! they were not well mated—not at all congenial—and so for the happiness of both they have parted."

This came to our ears through the hissing, groaning, rattling, and jerking sounds of steam-horse and car. The ladies seated in the seat behind ours took no sort of pains to suppress their tones—so that we did not feel delicate about overhearing them.

"What a pity," was the next thing that reached us. "*What* a pity! such a fine establishment—such beautiful gardens—such style as they lived in—really, it is quite melancholy to think of all this being broken up—I had supposed them very happy together."

"Oh! no—far from it. Things have been growing worse and worse between them for a long time. I think it is the best thing that Mrs. —— can do to return to her own relatives. She will reside with her favorite brother; and as Mr. —— is by no means a close man, she will be well provided for out of his large fortune."

The conversation then wandered away to other things; and our ears became closed to it in consequence of the profundity of the brown study into which its opening topic had plunged us.

"Parted!" had they? It did not then matter what their names were or where they dwelt—they were a man and his wife, and they had *parted*. It *was* a great pity that the splendid establishment must close. Yes, indeed—who wouldn't say that? but, then, wasn't it *rather* unfortunate that the two hearts which should have been to each other more than all the establishments and palaces of the entire world, were closed to each other? Wasn't it a *slight* matter of regret that the command of the Almighty Author of love, "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder," had been set at naught; and that twain who, by the most solemn vows and at the holy altar, had been made "one flesh" were now attempting (*vain* effort—such vows *never let go their hold*—they may be made to bring forth either blessing or cursing, but they bind beyond all undoing save that of death, or deadly crime,) to tear themselves apart?

One would have thought to hear the ladies talk that these latter considerations were matters of minor importance; or rather of no importance *at all*. But surely it is enough to cause one to shudder through all one's soul to muse upon a deed like that of this unhappy pair. And the fact that such things are becoming so common makes a wedding a *terrible* affair. We had rather attend a funeral—*if it be a stranger's*—than a wedding. Not that we wish strangers to die, but that we are *so afraid* of witnessing that most shocking and awful of perjuries—a marriage where true, long-suffering, and actual love is not.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. M. K.—It is foolish to attempt to force a young girl to marry you against her will. Better seek for a willing victim. The parallax of a star is the angle of that apparent change of its position occasioned by the annual revolution of the earth. When a vessel moves in the water, or a train on a railroad, everything seems to move, and the nearer the object the quicker the apparent motion. A distant hill or a star does not seem to move—not at all. Now we move round the sun, and, consequently, are at one time 200 millions of miles from the position we occupied six months before. This ought to make a sensible change in the relative position of stars at different distances, unless they are immeasurably distant, and the fact of the apparent change being immeasurably small, proves the distance of the star from the earth to be immeasurable. Many astronomers declare that they have measured the parallax of some of the nearest or brightest stars, but it is somewhat doubtful whether the measurement of such a minute change can be depended upon.

South Windham, Maine.—A correspondent writes from this place that if we will send him the Ledger, he will remit the amount due every six months without fail, and that his reason for objecting to paying in advance is based on the fact, that when he was quite young he formed the opinion that it is better always to pay when the work is done. We have only to say to this gentleman that, in case he always adheres to the opinion formed in his days of youthful greenness, he will never be able to secure a lodgment for his name among the illustrious ones which fill and adorn the voluminous subscription books of the New York Ledger.

Savannah, Ga.—A subscriber writes from this city, and implores us to give borrowers of the Ledger a thorough rasping, inasmuch as he is constantly pestered by them. We had rather turn our attention to the lenders of the Ledger; they are the ones who are to blame. Were there no lenders there could *not* be any borrowers; and as long as people are foolish enough to lend their paper to the despicable creatures who are too mean to subscribe for it, we hope the latter will never return a number that they once get their pernicious claws upon. The *lenders* have the game entirely in their own hands, and can block it whenever they choose.

A Widow says she is a tailoress, and has to depend upon her needle for the support of herself and her half-orphan children, but that the tailors of the village in which she lives have refused to work for any establishment that employs women; that she fears she will, therefore, be deprived of employment, and asks what she shall do. If the needle-women of her village are thrown out of employment by such a combination on the part of their masculine rivals, let them appeal to the public, and they will be sustained against such contemptible oppression.

Inquirer wishes to know what we would think of parents who, after their daughter had become engaged, with their consent, to marry a certain young man, should encourage the visits to her of another man, and take every possible occasion to have her go into company with him, during the absence of her betrothed lover? We think such parents must be very indiscreet, or else that they have determined to break up the match between their daughter and her lover. Their conduct, in either case, is reprehensible.

Romeo.—We have never met with the couplet you mention, namely:—

"Night threw her mantle o'er the earth,
And pinned it with the stars."

You were probably thinking of—

"Night drew her sable curtain round,
And pinned it with a star,"

which was written by a poor, half-crazy genius, who once resided in this city.

Philos.—When the "h" is not aspirated, *i. e.*, not pronounced, "an" is used; when the "h" is pronounced, "a" is used. But English printers make sad blunders in their own language. Even the Bible is sadly misprinted in this respect. Thus—"The hill of God is an high hill," should be printed, "the hill of God is a high hill," because the "h" in high is aspirated.

Louisiana wishes to know if it is proper for a young lady to drive fast, and think a great deal of horses? As to the fast driving, that must depend upon circumstances; but we think that every noble nature has a decided partiality for horses.

Mary.—You cannot do better than to consult your mother in regard to any matrimonial projects you may have in view.

A Young Husband informs us that he has a sweet, dear, charming, excellent little wife, of sixteen, "who is every thing he wishes," except—he is afraid she will give him cause for jealousy. They board at a fashionable hotel, and on the side of the table opposite to them, but some distance down, sits a handsome stranger, with dark eyes, which he keeps rivetted on the face of our young husband's charming little wife; and the young husband thinks that his charming little wife knows it, and he even believes that she, on one occasion, cast a furtive, backward glance—a la Lot's wife—at this handsome stranger, as she was passing out of the breakfast-room. *This* fills our young husband's breast with anxious forebodings; *this* turns his milk of human kindness to curd in his bosom, and,—what shall he do? He should, first of all, become a man, and then set at work to root out such a silly, baseless and contemptible spirit of jealousy from his bosom. However strictly his young wife may behave, as a matter of principle, and however faithfully she may discharge her domestic duties, it is hardly possible that she will long be able to love or respect a man of such a petty, suspicious and jealous nature as this "young husband" unwittingly confesses himself to be.

Conscience.—This correspondent says he has been engaged in a dishonest business for some time, and that his conscience continually stings him for it. He wishes and has tried to get into an honest business, but he can't, and if he leaves his present avocation his family will suffer. "What shall I do?" he asks. Quit your present business without delay, whatever the consequences to yourself and family. Better that they should all die of starvation than that you should persist in a course of dishonesty. As long as you hold on to a criminal calling you cannot, of course, get into a reputable business, but should you cast off the bonds of iniquity, which at present bind your energies, you would without doubt be able to find honorable employment before your family would seriously suffer.

Mrs. Ewen wishes us to ask Fanny Fern to write a piece, and send it to her for her little boy, to speak at an exhibition, and also an epitaph for the tombstone of a dead mother. It may be of service to many who have made, and contemplate making requests similar to the foregoing, to know that they cannot possibly be complied with. Should a farmer be requested to sow a certain field with a particular kind of grain, harvest it, and forward it free of charge to the asker, he would probably think the request impertinent and unreasonable. We have sometimes thought that authors might possibly take the same view of such requests as they are bored with for gratuitous writing at a mark.

P. R. J.—Roland and Oliver are semi-fabulous heroes—renowned French Knights. Roland was a nephew of Charlemagne, and Oliver one of that monarchs twelve Paladins. Though ardent rivals, they were bosom friends; and were so equally matched in prowess, that it could not be determined which was the superior. They both fell, after performing prodigies of valor, on the memorable field of Roncesvalles. The phrase, "A Roland for an Oliver," is supposed to have originated in their generous rivalry and equal prowess.

Fairmount.—Had you bought a copy of the Yankee Privateer advertised as containing the commencement of a novelette by Sylvanus Cobb, Jr., you would have discovered that the tale is an *old* one, as the editor of that paper has the honesty to tell his readers. He does not attempt to palm off upon the public an old story for a new one for the purpose of catching the pennies of the author's myriad admirers. Mr. Cobb does not write for any publication whatever except the Ledger.

P. T. wishes to know what a young man should do who finds himself in the position of escort to a couple of girls who live in opposite directions and at remote distances from each other. Shall I leave either of them; and if so, *which?*" he asks. You should *not* desert either of them. Let them settle it between themselves which shall go home first. If you are an agreeable companion, the lady who walks to the abode of the other, and then has you for company to her own home, will consider herself the most highly favored.

Christabelle.—We do not think that a man who habitually smokes in the presence of ladies, and talks to them with a segar in his mouth—who twits cripples of their deformities, and indulges in rude jests and sarcasms in public assemblies, can be a gentleman, however fine his coat, and shining his patent leathers, and massive his watch-chain, and pretentious his manners.

A Widower.—It is a harzardous thing for a man with young children and grown-up children to marry a second time. He will be certain to find himself surrounded with jealousies and conflicting interests, and sooner or later he will have to decide most painful questions and disputes between those whom he loves, and some of whom will be certainly aggrieved whatever his decision shall be.

J. O. J. wishes to say to certain publishers, who are living upon the old stories of some of our leading contributors, that when their resources are exhausted in that direction, he has an old almanac, which was printed in the year 1800, that contains much original matter, and which he will place at their disposal, in order that they may not be compelled to pay for new contributions.

An Admirer writes us from Cleveland that a young lady recently "struck him with a lovely smile," from the effects of which he has not yet recovered, and wants to know what he can do to overcome it. Perhaps the best antidote to the "lovely smile" would be an "ugly frown" from the same countenance.

H. O. B.—The reason the word "negro" is not commenced with a capital letter the same as German, American, &c., is because it is not a proper name any more than "black man" or "white man." When we speak of an African, Ethiopian, Dahomian, or any particular race of negroes, the noun becomes a proper one and is then capitalized.

Young America.—It is of no consequence, so far as etiquette is concerned, whether a gentleman helps a lady into or out of a carriage before or after unhitching or hitching his horse, but if the animal were restive, he should do that which would be most safe. The driver should sit on the right-hand side.

Orlando.—It is not obligatory upon a beau to hand a lady money to drop into a contribution box. She might not wish to accept it—she might not wish to drop it in. Let the beau contribute liberally himself and leave others to do as they please.

Mary R. S.—We have not time to read verses or paragraphs for the purpose of giving our opinion of them. We should be glad to accommodate all our correspondents in this respect, but we could not do it even if we had as many hands as Briarius and as many eyes as Argus.

C. H. R.—When the "Island Princess" is finished, you can easily compute the cost of the Ledgers at four cents each from June 7th, 1856 the date of the commencement of the "Storm Secret," to the number which concludes Mrs. Southworth's beautiful story.

A Baltimorean.—If you are so much annoyed by what your friends say in regard to your "intended's" acquaintances, you had better not marry her: a man who will permit any one to say aught that reflects upon his betrothed, is not fit to marry.

Leon.—We are not versed in matters pertaining to the stage, and are entirely innocent of all knowledge of green-room performances; nor are we any better informed in regard to the requisites of actors and actresses and their salaries.

Anxiety.—This correspondent, who is a young lady, wishes to know whether it would be judicious in her to marry a railroad conductor or telegraph operator, she having "offers" from both. We think it would be safe to do so, provided they are moral and well-to-do young men.

Quandary.—You would be acting insanely to marry, under the circumstances you mention. You should at least wait three years, until you are of age, and in the meantime endeavor to behave in such a manner as to win your parents' consent to the proposed marriage.

H. S. H.—A bath should not be prolonged more than half-an-hour, and it would be better to get through it as speedily as possible. As a general thing, warm baths are preferable to cold.

Book-keeper.—You had better yield gracefully to the suggestions of the young lady's parents. If your love is of that "undying" kind you represent it to be, it will easily keep until you become of age.

Confidential.—The manner of exchanging salutations with ladies, and of addressing them, can only be learned by experience. We cannot enable you to do such things with grace by written or printed instructions.

Our Correspondents must write with good black ink and in a plain hand, if they want their communications attended to. Watery ink and a microscopic hand are altogether too trying to our eyesight and patience.

E. B. W.—A private soldier of the United States Army is not sent back by the Government to his place of enlistment, when his time of service expires.

Fearful.—You had better go to a good dentist and have the "filling" examined. If it be as you fear, your health may be ruined unless a remedy be at once applied.

Stammering Reader.—You will find the method of cure for stammering to which you refer, in the "Answers" of the Ledger for April 25th last.

Virginia.—We are much obliged for the friendly spirit evinced in your complimentary verses.

Printer's Boy.—The name "Ximene" is pronounced *Zi-ma-ne*—three syllables.

G. R. Tingle.—The numbers of the Ledger from the third of January last to the 16th of May will cost you eighty cents.

Pete Bracy.—You could probably make a three months' trip to England for $250.

Stranger.—We know nothing about the "bridge that is to be built over the East River."

Philomath.—You had better go through college.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*